CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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INDIA TAKES 'AI' CENTRE STAGE

All eyes are on New Delhi, where India is hosting the AI Impact Summit 2026 — and markets worldwide are watching closely

5 days
Feb 16-20

3,250 speakers

500 sessions

High-profile speakers

Sundar Pichai of Alphabet (Google)

Sam Altman of OpenAI

Dario Amodei of Anthropic

India stands at forefront of AI transformation: PM

NEW DELHI

As India hosts the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said India stands at forefront of AI transformation.

Taking to X, PM Modi wrote, "Bringing the world together to discuss AI! Starting today, India hosts the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. I warmly welcome world leaders, captains of industry, innovators, policymakers, researchers and tech enthusiasts from across the world for this Summit."

The AI Impact Summit has drawn global attention to the country's growing tech capabilities, terming it a moment of pride for the nation and a reflection of the potential of India's youth.

He added, "The theme of the Summit is Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya or welfare for all, happiness for all, reflecting our shared commitment to harnessing Artificial Intelligence for human-centric progress." The PM further said, "AI is transforming several sectors, including healthcare, education, agriculture, governance and enterprise."

"The AI Impact Summit will enrich global discourse on diverse aspects of AI, such as innovation, collaboration, responsible use and more," he wrote. He thanked the people of India, as the nation stands at the forefront of the AI transformation.

NEW DELHI

The world's largest artificial intelligence conclave, the India AI Impact Summit 2026, kicked off at Bharat Mandapam here on Monday, drawing technologists, policymakers, industry leaders, founders, and enthusiasts in huge numbers to deliberate on the transformative impact of the technology.

AI Impact Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday inaugurated the event and visited various stalls, and spoke with the companies participating in the expo. The expo features over 600 high-potential startups and 13 country pavilions showcasing international collaboration in AI ecosystem. Expo brings together global technology firms, startups, academia and research institutions, central and state governments, and international partners.

At the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, many global leaders are scheduled to attend the AI Impact Summit, including French President Emmanuel Macron and Brazilian President Lula da Silva - the presence of these heads of state underscores the high-level international engagement and interest around the AI agenda.

'India a 'full-stack AI leader in world'

Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI

Altman described India as a potential "full-stack AI leader" and announced plans to expand the company's footprint in the country. He said India has become OpenAI's second-largest user base globally, after the US, with over 100 million weekly active users. "OpenAI is committed to doing its part to help build AI in India, with India, and for India," he added.

GLOBAL REACTIONS

Pride in India's scientific progress

Bill Gates, Businessman

Bill Gates said it was a matter of immense pride that global leaders are converging in India for the summit. In a post on X, he said: "It is a matter of immense pride for us that people from all over the world are coming to India for the India AI Impact Summit. This also shows the capability of our country's youth."

'India isn't just participating, it's shaping what's next'

Cristiano Amon, CEO, Qualcomm

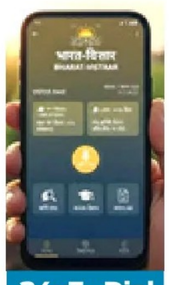
"India is not merely part of the global AI conversation but is actively shaping its future. The next phase of AI growth will depend on democratising access through efficient data centres, powerful on-device intelligence and advanced connectivity such as 6G.

'AI for economic development and social good'

Shantanu Narayen, chairman and CEO of Adobe

India has consistently demonstrated what ambition and imagination can achieve. He praised the government's leadership in convening the first global AI summit in the Global South and reaffirmed Adobe's commitment to commercially safe and responsible AI innovation.

AI boost for farmers: India rolls out Bharat-VISTAAR



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NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday will roll out Bharat-VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources), an AI-driven multilingual platform aimed at delivering farm-related information directly to farmers in their own language via mobile or a simple phone call.

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan will formally launch the initiative in Jaipur, in the presence of Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma.

Designed as a round-the-clock "digital agriculture expert," Bharat-VISTAAR can be accessed in two modes, including via a dedicated helpline number (155261). Its conversational AI assistant, named 'Bharati', will offer guidance on crop planning, packages of practices and pests, weather forecasts, markets, scheme information, eligibility, application, and grievance.

What is Bharat VISTAAR?

Proposed in the Union Budget 2026-27, it's a multi-layered digital platform, designed to provide end-to-end support to the Indian agricultural community.

FEATURES

- AI advisories
- Schemes info
- Multilingual support
- Open APIs
- Voice Access
- State Systems

"Disturbing Trend": SC junks plea over Sarma's 'Miya' remark

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court struck a displeased note Monday afternoon as it turned down petitions to file a police case, and order an inquiry by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma over alleged hate speech incidents.

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant, and including Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul Pancholi, directed the petitioners to first approach the Gauhati High Court and lamented the growing trend of the top court becoming the first stop to resolve disputes, particularly before an election.

In this instance, Assam will hold an Assembly election likely in March or April.

The incidents in question refer to a video, released by the ruling BJP's Assam unit, that showed him shooting at a photograph of Muslims and, before that, comments about Miyas, i.e., Bengali-speaking Muslims whom the BJP has called "illegal infiltrators".

On these issues – the video and the comments – the court urged political parties to restrain themselves and "act within the boundaries of constitutional morality". "But this (approaching of the Supreme Court directly) is becoming a trend just before elections," the petitioners were told.

X goes down worldwide, including India

MUMBAI

Social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, went down for thousands of users worldwide on Monday, with reports of widespread disruptions pouring in from the US, UK and India.

According to Downdetector, outage complaints surged to more than 25,000 at around 18:30 IST, as users reported problems accessing the platform and loading posts. The cause of the outage was not immediately clear.

Users across multiple countries flagged issues nearly simultaneously, suggesting the disruption was not limited to a specific geography. Many said the app and website failed to refresh feeds, while others reported login problems.

Downdetector's live tracking showed a sharp spike in complaints within a short window, pointing to a significant service interruption.

Most of these users reported issues with the website, while others raised complaints about the app. A portion of netizens also struggled to access their feeds or timelines on X, the data showed.

7 charred to death as massive blaze engulfs chemical factory

BHIWADI (RAJASTHAN)

Seven workers were burnt alive in a massive fire that broke out at a chemical factory in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi on Monday, while 10 workers are still feared trapped.

When the fire broke out around 9.30 am, 20-25 workers were working in the factory. Within minutes, flames spread from the private industrial unit and engulfed large section of the factory. Some workers managed to escape.

Additional District Magistrate Sumita Mishra said the incident first came to light during routine police patrolling in the area. Police, fire brigade personnel, medical teams, and administrative officials swiftly reached the site and cordoned off the spot to facilitate relief efforts.

The fire was brought under control after one-and-a-half hours of firefighting operations.

Authorities have yet to confirm the exact cause of the fire.

The district administration has announced a magisterial inquiry to determine the cause of the fire and assess any lapses in safety protocols.

COMPASSION UNLIMITED

Woman takes 20 furry friends home, sets trend

BENGALURU

After the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) announced that it would give away stray dogs for adoption, people now are coming forward to take them in.

In a heartwarming act of compassion, Sujaya Jagadish from the North City Corporation limits has adopted 20 street dogs in one single move, providing them with safety, care, and a new lease of life.

The adoption was carried out in accordance with legal provisions under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (PCA Act) and the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules,

GBA breaks its own rule!

Citing growing complaints over public safety, neighbourhood disturbances and gaps in registration, the GBA has drafted a comprehensive regulatory framework aimed at bringing order to the city's estimated 2 lakh pet dogs. Of the rules, including mandatory microchips and breed curbs, three dogs cap had drawn widespred criticism.

2023. The GBA has vaccinated, sterilised and tagged the dogs before handing them over to the new owner.

The Authority had earlier faced criticism for feeding stray dogs chicken rice and building shelters for them. Now, the authority is adopting a new approach by giving away the dogs for adoption.

GBA's efforts started bearing fuits

The response to the adoption drive has been encouraging, with people coming forward to take in the stray dogs. The GBA hopes that this initiative will promote animal welfare and improve public health in the city.

The GBA has appealed to the public, NGOs, and resident welfare associations to come forward and adopt stray dogs. The authority is providing vaccinated and spayed dogs for adoption, and hopes that this will help reduce the stray dog population in the city.

QUICK READ

Trade deal: Indian team to visit US next week

NEW DELHI: A team of Indian officials will visit the US next week to finalise the legal text for an interim trade agreement, which is expected to be signed in March, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday. The visit is likely to start from February 23. India and the US earlier this month released a joint statement announcing that a framework for an interim trade agreement has been finalised. "The joint statement lays down the contours of the deal. Now the contours of the deal has to be translated into a legal agreement, which will be signed between the two sides," he told reporters here. Joint Secretary in Commerce Ministry Darpan Jain to lead a delegation to US.

Sabarimala: SC to hear petitions from April 7

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday said a nine-judge bench would start from April 7 its final hearing on a batch of petitions relating to discrimination against women in religions and at religious places, including Kerala's Sabarimala Temple. A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said the Constitution bench, to be set up by the CJI, will commence the crucial hearing on the petitions on April 7 and conclude its proceedings on April 22. The court asked the parties to file their written submissions on or before March 14.

CII hosts "Inspiring Women to Live Fulfilling Lives 2026" in Mysuru

MYSURU

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Mysuru, through its CSR & DEI Panel, successfully organised the second edition of "Inspiring Women to Live Fulfilling Lives 2026" at the Infosys Campus, Mysuru. The symposium witnessed participation from over 200 delegates representing the IT sector, academia, healthcare institutions and diverse industries.

Trishikha Kumari Wadiyar, Chairperson, Bherunda Foundation, joined the symposium through a virtual presence and addressed the gathering, encouraging women to pursue holistic growth and a purposeful life. The programme was structured around four core themes - Financial Well-being, Mental Well-being, Physical Well-being and Emotional Well-being - offering practical insights aligned to both personal and professional excellence.

Savitha Mallappa, Convenor, CII Mysuru CSR & DEI Panel, said, this symposium was curated to move beyond dialogue and provide actionable frameworks on well-being and inclusion. When organisations consciously invest in financial awareness, mental resilience, physical health and emotional strength, they build stronger and more sustainable workplaces.

Nagaraja Gargeshwari, Chairman, CII Mysuru Zone, said inclusive growth and industrial competitiveness go hand in hand. As Mysuru continues to evolve as a knowledge and industry hub, it is essential that organisations create ecosystems where women can participate, progress and lead with confidence. Such platforms convert intent into structured industry action.

The symposium featured experienced panellists from diverse backgrounds who shared insights and best practices on financial independence, mental health awareness, preventive healthcare and organisational health frameworks. The discussions emphasised the importance of breaking stigma, enabling open conversations and creating supportive environments that help women lead fulfilling personal and professional lives.

This second edition also marked the launch of a Women Return-to-Work platform, aimed at connecting women aspiring to re-enter the workforce after a career break with industry partners, and enabling engagement in phased approach with the able support from Infosys Limited, rProcess Outsourcing Services Pvt Ltd and SDM Institute for Management Development and all the sponsors for their valuable support in making the symposium a success.

The symposium concluded with participant reflections and strong appreciation for the depth of discussions, expert-led sessions and the spirit of cross-sector collaboration.

Power Disruption tomorrow

MYSURU

Due to underground cable laying works on the 11 kV Archaeology and 11 kV Chandramouleshwara power lines under the V.V. Mohalla Sub-Division, there will be intermittent/occasional power interruptions on February 18, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the following areas: 1. Areas under 11 kV Archaeology feeder:

Vani Vilas Layout, Railway Layout, M.G. Koppalu, Abhishek Circle, Ambarish Road, Surya Furniture area and surrounding localities.

2. Areas under 11 kV Chandramouleshwara feeder: K.D. Road, Adipampa Road, Panchavati Road and surrounding areas, said Executive Engineer of Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESC), V.V. Mohalla Division in a press release.

Due to fourth quarterly maintenance works at the 66/11 kV Dattagalli Power Distribution Centre under the V.V. Mohalla Division, power supply will be interrupted on February 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the following areas: Dattagalli 3rd Stage, Triveni Super Market area, Kadamba Bakery area, Dattagalli 'I' Block, MUDA Employees Layout, Andolana Circle, Sub-Registrar Office area, Kanakadasa Nagar, Aditya Circle, Somanatha Nagar, Mahalakshmi Layout (Kergalli), Kalki Layout, Nandi Circle (Dattagalli), Jodi Bevinamara (Dattagalli), Ramakrishnanagar, R.T. Nagar, Lingambudipalya, University Layout, Vasu Layout, K-Block R.K. Nagar, Mooganahundi, Nagarthahalli, Devegowdalli, Ballahalli, Anagalli, Tibbayanahundi, Beerihundi (IP limits), CESC Chief Engineer's Office, Karthik Layout I-Block and surrounding areas.

"The Village Satyagraha Must Continue as a Non-Violent Movement"

MYSURU

A consultative meeting of the satyagrahis of the Badanavalu Satyagraha was held at the Indian Institute of Educational Theatre in Mysuru.

Speaking on the occasion, Jayadev expressed the view that "the Village Satyagraha must continue as a non-violent movement."

The Badanavalu Satyagraha, which began 15 years ago, primarily focused on issues such as excessive use of vehicles, extravagant programmes, and commercialization, eventually taking the form of a movement. However, since the situation has not changed even today, Prasanna emphasized that it is important to deliberate on how to carry this satyagraha forward.

Recently, the government has sanctioned ₹40 crore for the development of the Badanavalu Nanjangud Khadi Centre. The government seems to consider mere construction of buildings as development. By centering activities around the Badanavalu Khadi Centre and promoting the sale of khadi products, it is possible to encourage rural cottage industries and provide employment to rural women within their own villages. The Khadi Centre has gained special significance because Mahatma Gandhi had visited Badanavalu. There is a need to realize the dream of sustainable living that upholds the values of village life.

At the meeting, there was also a discussion on renaming

the Badanavalu Satyagraha as "Grama Satyagraha." Participants shared their views at length regarding this resolution.

The meeting was attended by Gandhians including Prasanna, Jayadev, Yatiraj from Tumakuru, Venkataraju from Chamarajanagar, Punajuru Doreswamy, A.D. Silva, Tagadur Mohan, Badanavalu Mahadevappa, Umashankar, Pavitra Muddayya from Bengaluru, Lavanya and Abhilash from Grama Seva Sangha, writer G.P. Basavaraju, Rashmi Koti from Andolana newspaper, and farmer Karunakara. Prasanna read out the draft resolution at the meeting, and all participants expressed their consent to it.

Draft Resolution:

The historic Badanaval Satyagraha of 2015 had passed several resolutions concerning Sustainable lifestyle and Economy. Today, they have become more than ever unsustainable. Village economy is getting destroyed. Cities and machine made cultures have grown into a monster proportion, thus pushing humanity to the brink of extinction. They resolve to rename Badanval Satyagraha as Gram Satyagrah and lead it towards the rejuvination of the villages, the Hand-Made economy, Natural farming, Local culture, mother tongue, protection of deprived sections of the society and for the protection of damaged natural resources. They shall lead a Nonviolent and Constructive movement in the name of Gram Satyagrah.

Why Was the MLC Post Not Given to an OBC? Sa Ra questions CM

MYSURU

Janata Dal Secular Working President and former minister Sa. Ra. Mahesh questioned why the Legislative Council (MLC) position was not given to a member of the Backward Classes in Mysuru and instead taken by Dr Yathindra Siddaramaiah, son of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Addressing a news conference here on Monday, he said that while leaders talk about unity and development of Backward Classes, they themselves corner positions of power.

He criticized Dr Yathindra, asking why only their family should enjoy authority.

Mahesh alleged that since one member of the family is already the Chief Minister, they could have accommodated a person from the Backward Classes in the district as a MLC. Instead, the CM Siddaramaiah appointed his son to the post. Both Siddaramaiah and Yathindra have no moral right to speak about the welfare of Backward Classes.

Mahesh further urged the Chief Minister to pay attention to the alleged irregularities taking place in the cultural city of Mysuru and claimed that lakes across the district are being encroached upon and that the district administration is turning a blind eye when influential individuals are involved. Although Siddaramaiah has presented 17 state budgets, Congress legislators are being sent on foreign tours while there are no adequate funds for development works. Instead of controlling price rise, the government is organizing tours for MLAs and burdening the public.

He slammed the government for granting cabinet-rank status to chairpersons of various corporations and boards, while failing to provide houses to the poor even after three years in power. The Chief Minister to at least distribute housing in his home district.

Referring to former Chief Minister D. Devaraj Urs, Mahesh said that Urs distributed land to the poor, whereas the current government has burdened people with debt. The state's debt has crossed ₹7 lakh crore and that the cost of living has increased sharply.

Mahesh sought to know why vehicles of the Mysuru Urban Development Authority were auctioned off as scrap despite being in good condition. People's work is not being carried out efficiently in the authority and asked what the intelligence department is doing.

'Janarondige Janata Dal' Programme from Tomorrow in the District

MYSURU: The JDS youth wing has organized the "Janarondige Janata Dal" (Janata Dal with the People) programme at various places across the district. Party leaders have taken the initiative to strengthen the party in the Old Mysuru region.

Mahesh said the first programme will be held in Periyapatna on February 18 in the morning under the leadership of Nikhil Kumaraswamy.

Programmes are scheduled on February 22 at 4 p.m. in K.R. Nagar, on February 24 in T. Narasipura, and on February 25 at 11 a.m. in Hunsur. Events in H.D. Kote, Varuna, and Chamundeshwari constituencies will be decided shortly.

Mahesh said the initiative aims to reorganize the party in the district and bring back a coalition government in the state. He claimed that people are already disappointed with the Congress government and that even contractors have raised objections.

MLA G.D. Harish Gowda stated that through the "Janarondige Janata Dal" programme, Nikhil Kumaraswamy has already traveled 9,000 km and successfully carried out a membership registration drive.

Mr CM, provide patrolling vehicles to Mysuru Cops: Advocate Govardan

MYSURU

Gokul Govardan, a noted advocate and Team Mysuru founder has urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Home Minister Dr G.Parameshwar to first provide "Garuda" vehicles to Mysuru City Police and fill vacant police constable posts in police stations.

In a press release here, he said a serious question is troubling the public: are the Chief Minister and the Home Minister indirectly responsible for the increasing number of incidents occurring in Mysuru city?

Earlier, every police station in Mysuru city had one "Garuda" patrol vehicle. These vehicles were used for regular patrolling, preventing clashes, and responding promptly during various situations. Whenever a call was made to the respective police station or the control room, the Garuda vehicle would immediately be dispatched to the spot.

However, for more than one and a half years now, Mysuru city police stations have been functioning without Garuda vehicles. As a result, they are unable to conduct daily patrols effectively and cannot promptly respond to emergencies at incident sites to assist the public.

Govardan said the earlier Garuda vehicles (Mahindra jeeps) were withdrawn and sent for scrap after completing 15 years of service, in accordance with transport department policy. But for the past one and a half years, no new vehicles have been provided to the police stations. This is the situation in the Chief Minister's own home district. In addition, there is a shortage of police constables in every police station. According to available information, each station faces a shortage of 10 to 20 constables. If this situation continues, how can police personnel perform their duties effectively?

He said even now, there are not enough police stations proportionate to the population, and there have been repeated demands for more stations. In such circumstances, if the existing stations themselves suffer from staff shortages, how can they function properly? How can crimes be prevented? Chief Minister, Home Minister – please first provide Garuda vehicles and fill the vacant police personnel posts in every police station, he added.

MP Yaduveer attends Strategic Dialogues in Munich to Strengthen India–Europe and India–Bavaria Partnerships

MUNICH (GERMANY)

Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and titular head of the Mysuru kingdom, participated in a series of high-level engagements in Munich to contribute to strategic dialogue and cooperation initiatives between India, Bavaria, and the European Union.

He was a key speaker and participant in policy and security discussions alongside the India-Europe Resilience Forum and Munich Security Conference, highlighting India's growing role in global governance, technological collaboration, and geopolitical alignment. At the Hanns Seidel Foundation, he addressed the India-Europe Resilience Forum debate on India–EU technology cooperation, offering an Indian parliamentary perspective on resilience and digital collaboration. He also engaged with international delegates on economic partnerships, transnational challenges, and strategic development.

At a Munich Security Conference side event, he spoke on India's multi-alignment strategy, contributing to discussions on global stability and strategic cooperation. He participated in a closed-door fireside exchange examining India's development trajectory toward 2047.

Yaduveer also held meetings with Bavarian and German political leaders, including representatives of the Bavarian Parliament, Bavarian State Chancellery, and Bundestag, discussing regional development, digital transformation, and the Bavaria–Karnataka partnership framework. These engagements reinforced subnational diplomacy, investment collaboration, and knowledge exchange, advancing India–EU cooperation across technology, supply chains, and security policy, and strengthening long-term strategic partnerships.

Football Distribution to 25 Schools in Dist

MYSURU

Under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, the PM SHRI School Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti will distribute footballs to 333 government and aided schools in Mysuru district to promote sports among school children. As part of the inaugural event, footballs will be distributed to 25 schools under the chairmanship of G.D. Harish Gowda, MLA of Hunsur Assembly Constituency. The programme will be held on February 23 at 10:30 a.m. at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, DMG Halli, Mysuru Taluk. The Deputy Director of the Mysuru School Education Department will also be present on the occasion.

Mysuru Glows in Divine Splendour as Maha Shivaratri Awakens a Sea of Devotion

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM
MYSURU

The royal city of Mysuru transformed into a celestial haven as thousands of devotees immersed themselves in the sacred celebrations of Maha Shivaratri in Mysuru on Sunday. From dusk till dawn, the city shimmered not merely with colourful lights but with unwavering faith, devotion, and spiritual ecstasy.

As twilight descended, the temples dedicated to Lord Shiva radiated divine brilliance. The historic 101 Shiva Linga temple, Trineshwara Temple, Sri Kama Kameshwari Temple and prominent shrines across the city were adorned with dazzling arrays of multi-coloured lights, fragrant flowers, and traditional decorations. The glow of oil lamps flickered against intricately carved temple walls, creating a mesmerising spectacle that seemed to bridge earth and heaven.

Devotees, young and old, thronged Shiva temples in large numbers, patiently waiting in serpentine queues for a sacred glimpse — the darshan — of Mahadev. The air vibrated with the thunderous chants of "Har Har Mahadev," as voices rose in unison, reverberating through the streets and temple corridors. Each chant carried profound faith, invoking blessings of peace, prosperity, and spiritual awakening.

The entire night unfolded like a spiritual symphony. Bhajan mandalis gathered within temple premises and community halls, singing soul-stirring hymns in praise of Lord Shiva. The rhythmic beats of the tabla, the soothing notes of the harmonium, and the collective clapping of devotees created an atmosphere charged with divine energy. Sleep was forgotten, fatigue vanished — replaced by boundless devotion and joy.

Special abhishekas were performed with milk, honey, tender coconut water, and sacred bilva leaves. Priests chanted Vedic hymns as sacred rituals continued uninterrupted through the night. The fragrance of incense mingled with the cool night breeze, enveloping devotees in an aura of sanctity.

Families arrived together, dressed in traditional attire, carrying offerings of fruits, flowers, and coconuts. Children watched in awe as elders narrated the significance of Maha Shivaratri — the sacred night symbolising the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva and the triumph of light over darkness. Many observed day-long fasts, breaking them only after offering prayers at midnight, considered the most auspicious hour.

Security arrangements were tightened across major temples to ensure smooth darshan, while volunteers distributed prasadam and drinking water to the faithful. Despite the massive crowds, the spirit of cooperation and discipline prevailed, reflecting the cultural ethos of the city.

As dawn approached, the chants softened into serene prayers. The first rays of sunlight touched the temple towers, marking the culmination of a spiritually charged night. Yet, the glow on devotees' faces spoke of an inner illumination — a renewal of faith and hope.

Maha Shivaratri in Mysuru was not merely a festival; it was a divine experience — a night when the city stayed awake in devotion, hearts united in prayer, and the sacred cry of "Har Har Mahadev" echoed endlessly in the soul of the royal land.

At Ganapati Sachidananda Ashram

As part of the Shivaratri celebrations, Avadootha Sri Ganapati Sachidandanda Swamiji performed special abhisheka and mangalarati to the Sachchidanandeshwara Shiva Linga at the Universal Prayer Hall of the ashram and later addressed the media.

All-Night Chanting of Lord Shiva's Name

On the occasion of Shivaratri, continuous 24-hour Shiva nama smarana (chanting of Lord Shiva's name), night vigil, music, and bhajan programs were organized. Special artists from Tamil Nadu created 11 types of unique decorations symbolizing the Pancha Bhootas (five elements). For the convenience of devotees, arrangements had been made for Shiva Linga darshan and abhisheka both inside and outside the premises.

The Fusion of Science and Spirituality

Explaining the philosophy of Shiva, Swamiji said, "Shiva is formless and unchanging. He manifests in the form desired by devotees. According to scientists at NASA and modern science, the sky and even our Milky Way are structured in a Linga-like form. The entire universe comprises three aspects — Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara."

He further stated that there is no difference between Hari (Vishnu) and Hara (Shiva), and that the principle of Shankaranarayana represents the highest truth.

All India Postal Cultural Meet is to Showcase a variety of Performing Arts: Jitendra Gupta

MYSURU

The objective of the All India Postal Cultural Meet is to showcase the diversity of India's performing arts, said Director General of Postal Services, Jitendra Gupta.

He was speaking today after inaugurating the 38th All India Postal Cultural Meet at the Cauvery Auditorium of Karnataka State Open University here on Monday.

Chief Guest, internationally renowned violinist Mysore M. Manjunath, said that customers visiting a post office experience the warmth of visiting their own home rather than a government office. The Postal Department, which is synonymous with dedicated service, not only delivers letters from one place to another but also carries emotions. Despite the rise of social media, the Postal Department has retained its significance.

Chief Postmaster General of the Karnataka Postal Circle, K Prakash, said that India's art and culture are respected by countries across the world.

On the occasion, a special commemorative postal cover of the conference was released.

Among those present were violinist Mysore M. Nagaraj, Postmaster General of the Karnataka Postal Circle Sandesh Mahadevappa, Director of the Bengaluru Central Region V. Tara, and Director of the Mysuru Postal Training Centre Ashish Singh Thakur.

The four-day conference, scheduled from February 16 to 20, 2026, will witness 335 employees from 21 postal circles across the country showcasing their talents.

Expansion of Gruha Arogya Scheme to Urban Areas; Understand the Action Plan: DHO

MYSURU

Dr. Kumaraswamy P.C., District Health and Family Welfare Officer, said that with the ambitious Gruha Arogya Scheme of the Government of Karnataka now being extended to urban areas, it is essential to understand the action plan and operational framework of the programme.

Speaking after inaugurating a one-day refresher training programme for ASHA workers of Mysuru city health centres, organised at the District Health and Family Welfare Department office auditorium here on Monday, he said ASHA workers were instructed to complete the field-level survey activities within their respective areas as part of the programme implementation.

On the same occasion, the handbook for ASHA workers under the urban Gruha Arogya Scheme was officially released.

District Surveillance Officer Dr. Nagaraj D.G., said that the Government of Karnataka has implemented the Gruha Arogya Scheme as a major initiative to deliver free health check-ups and medicines at the doorstep of citizens aged above 30 years. Launched in October 2024, the scheme primarily focuses on early detection of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and cancers (oral, breast, and cervical).

He explained that under the scheme, ASHA workers and health staff conduct door-to-door surveys and screenings to identify these diseases at an early stage.

The objective of the programme is to detect illnesses in their initial stages, prevent morbidity and mortality, and provide better healthcare services to the public. Teams comprising ASHA workers and Community Health Officers visit households to conduct health check-ups and supply medicines. Patients diagnosed with illnesses will be referred to nearby government hospitals for further treatment, he added.

The training programme was attended by District RCH Officer Dr. Mohammed Siraj Ahmed, trainer and H.D. Kote specialist doctor Dr. Prajwal, district-level health supervisors, ASHA workers, and other health staff.

4th edition of 'Paridrushya' Intl Shortfilm and documentary festival in Mysuru

MYSURU

The fourth edition of the "Paridrushya International Short Film and Documentary Festival" is being organized by the Mysore Cinema Society at Maharaja's College Ground in Mysuru from Feb 20 to 22.

Disclosing this at a news conference here on Monday, Dr. Chandrashekhar G.R., Honorary President, Mysore Cinema Society and Head Cauvery Hospital and Education Institutions, said as many as 3042 short films and documentaries from 114 countries of the world have come to this festival. India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Brazil, Spain, France, China, not specified, United States, Turkey, Italy, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, Mexico, Egypt, United States United States United States, Germany, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Canada, Argentina, Taiwan, Portugal, Poland, Colombia, Ukraine, Pakistan, Malaysia, Belgium, Nigeria, Syrian Arab Republic, Peru, Morocco, Chile, Australia, Greece, Japan, Ireland, Croatia, Netherlands, Israel, United Arab Emirates, Uganda, Tunisia, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Balearic Islands, South Africa, Uzbekistan, Serbia, Costa Rica, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Romania, Kenya, Fiji, Austria, Denmark, Cuba, Thailand, Slovakia, Nepal, Lebanon, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Hungary, Georgia, Germany, Spain, Cameroon, Belarus, Afghanistan, Venezuela, Tajikistan, Togo, Sweden, Philippines, New Zealand, Lesotho, Jordan, Italy, Morocco, Iraq, Estonia, Switzerland, Canada, United States, Iran, Islamic Republic of, Zambia, Uruguay, Senegal, Estonia, Saudi Arabia, United States, Rwanda, Qatar, State of Palestine, Puerto Rico, Panama, Norway, Mauritania, Mongolia, Myanmar, Montenegro, Latvia Movies have come from countries like the State of Palestine, Lithuania, Lebanon, etc.

He said the inaugural program of the Paridrishya Film Festival will be held on Feb 20 at 10 am. Senior Kannada actor and Rajya Sabha member Jaggesh, director Prakash Belawadi, writer Jogi Girish Rao Hatwar, Dr. V Nagendra Prasad, actress Karunya Ram Gowda and Lasya Nagaraj will participate in this program. A musical program has been organized on the same day evening by Rajesh Krishnan and MD Pallavi and on Feb 21 by Hemanth Kumar and Lahari Mahesh.

Dr Chandrashekar said the closing ceremony will be held on Feb 22nd at 5 pm and will feature Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, actor Dolly Dhananjaya, KFCC President Dr. Jayamala, and Jayani Benim - CEO Beslim Groups.

There will be an award ceremony at the closing ceremony. A total 30 awards are being given to selected short films and documentaries participating in this festival. In the short film category, the awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Cinematography, Best Storyboarding (Strainplay), Best Sound Design, Best Music, Best Visual Effects, Best Production Design, Best Editing and Best Supporting Actor will be presented. In the documentary category, the awards for Best Documentary and Jury Menon will be presented.

In the Kannada category, the award for the Best Kannada Film will be presented. A total of 30 awards will be presented in various categories to honor creativity and excellence in the film industry. Awards will be distributed in professional and student categories.

On this occasion, there will be master classes on Writing Screenplays by Jogi Girish, The future of documentary film making by Manish Desai, Analysing Ozu by Timothy W Pollock and Direction practices by P Sheshadri.

A panel discussion on Cinema as a tool of shaping narratives will be handled by Manju Borah, Manish Saini and Shreeraj Gudi; the path taken by Kannada cinema by Dr. Rajendra Singh Babu, Girija Lokesh and Arun Bharadwaj; Story to Screenplay by Phani ramachandra and Vikas Neglloni.

CESC to hold awareness week program

MYSURU

Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESC) will conduct an "Awareness Week Programme" under the chairmanship of the Assistant Executive Engineer (Electrical) to educate electricity consumers under the Kuvempunagar and Ramakrishnanagar O&M Sub-Divisions in Mysuru Taluk. The programme aims to create awareness about services and facilities of the Electricity Department, address consumer grievances, and promote electrical safety. On February 17 at 11 a.m., the programme for Vivekananda section consumers will be held at the Ramakrishnanagar O&M Sub-Division Office. At 3 p.m., programmes for Jayapura and Harohalli section consumers will take place at the Jayapura O&M Section Office, CESC, and for Saraswathipuram and Aravinda Nivedita sections at Kuvempu High School on Kamakshi Hospital Road. Consumers may attend and submit written grievances, according to a press release from the Executive Engineer, V.V. Mohalla O&M Division.

"AI not a technology to replace farmers, but strengthens decision-making power"

MYSURU

The future of agriculture can be made brighter by integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into farming practices, opined Dr. K.M. Harini Kumar, Special Officer of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Mandya.

He was speaking after inaugurating a workshop organized at the auditorium of the Central Institute of Indian Languages on the occasion of Radio Kisan Day. The workshop focused on the use of Artificial Intelligence in agriculture and agricultural innovations. He emphasized that adopting AI in agriculture can significantly enhance its future prospects.

Dr. Harini Kumar observed that India's agricultural land is akin to heaven, but excessive use of chemicals is gradually turning it into barren land. Agriculture forms the backbone of the country's socio-economic system, and rural livelihoods are sustained primarily by farming. The food security and value-added food processing sectors have the potential to generate substantial employment opportunities.

He pointed out that the agriculture sector provides direct and indirect employment to nearly 46 per cent of the population and contributes about 18 per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Industries dependent on agriculture must adopt new dimensions and innovations to remain economically strong. Although the government extends considerable support to the agriculture sector, farmers continue to face challenges due to climate change, rising input costs, crop risks, and market instability, he noted.

He highlighted that Artificial Intelligence can assist in making data-driven and predictive decisions in agriculture. AI can be extremely helpful in improving farmers' livelihoods and enhancing their knowledge base. "Artificial Intelligence is not meant to replace farmers, but to empower their decision-making capacity," he clarified.

Assistant Director of All India Radio, Manjunath N. Bedre said that All India Radio has been playing a significant role in advancing the agricultural sector through its dedicated farm programmes. Efforts are being made to introduce innovative programmes and deliver them to farmers in a phased manner. Agricultural programmes broadcast on All India Radio address the immediate needs of farmers and provide timely information related to the farming sector. Artificial Intelligence is being adopted across various sectors in recent times, and incorporating it into agriculture would greatly benefit farmers.

Director of the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Prof. Shailendra Mohan, programme executive N. Keshava Murthy, P. Anand, and other dignitaries were present at the event.

No power supply today, tomorrow

MYSURU

Due to construction of new electric towers and stringing of new conductors by the O&M Division of KPTCL, Mandya, power supply will be interrupted on February 17 and 18 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in areas coming under the 11 kV Nehrunagar, Bharat Nagar, Sathagalli–N.J.Y., and Hanchya–N.J.Y. feeders emanating from the 66/11 kV Devanur Power Distribution Centre.

The affected areas include: Nehru Nagar, D.T.S. Rao Nagar, Arnold School area, Kaveri Nagar, Santhpur Layout, Sathagalli 'B' Layout, VTU College and surrounding areas; Bharat Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar; Hanchya, Sathagalli 'A' Layout, around Prajwal Hospital; Eedgah Maidan, Rajeev Nagar, Tavarekere Nagar; Sonia Layout and surrounding areas; Rammanahalli, Hanchya, Kalisiddanahundi, Galigarahundi, Ashraya Layout and nearby localities, according to a press release by the Executive Engineer of the CESC, N.R. Mohalla Division.

QUICK READ

Union Defence Minister arrives in Bengaluru

BENGALURU

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who is on a two-day tour of Bengaluru to participate in various programmes and meetings in Bengaluru, arrived at the HAL airport on Monday by a special flight. The Union Defence Minister was welcomed by senior officials including Chairman and Managing Directors of HAL Dr Sunil, Manoj Jain of BEL, Shantanurai of BEML, Mahadeva Rao of BDL, Lieutenant General JK Gera and others. The Defence Minister will participate in various programmes to be held in Bengaluru for two days on Monday and Tuesday.

200 companies attend capacity-building workshop

BENGALURU

More than 200 organisations from within Electronics City, Bommasandra Jigani, Veerasandra, and neighbouring industrial clusters participated in the capacity-building workshop on the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS) at IIIT-B.The workshop focused on assisting stakeholders to update apprenticeship reforms, thereby urging them to increase the number of apprentices and establishments under the ambit of apprenticeship. Organisations included those working in defence and aerospace, power, retail, telecom, IT and ITeS, electronics, and automotive sectors.

FIR over attempt to call, threaten ex-SC judges

BENGALURU

An incident has been reported in which a former Supreme Court judge was called and tried to threaten him by pretending to be an officer of the Bengaluru Cyber Cell. An FIR has been registered in this regard at the Cyber Crime Police Station. Supreme Court Principal Secretary Bharat Parashar has filed a complaint against former Supreme Court judge J Chelameswar for allegedly trying to intimidate him by a fraudster who called him. The police have registered a case based on this complaint. On January 9, unknown persons who called tried to threaten him by introducing themselves as officials from the Cyber Cell of Bengaluru. On the instructions of J Chelameswar, Bharat Parashar filed a complaint with the Cyber Police Station of Bengaluru against the unknown persons who had threatened him.

BWSSB lists 448 water-critical zones in city

Officials say these are not large layouts or entire colonies, but small, concentrated micro-pockets within larger supply zones

BENGALURU

With temperatures climbing earlier than usual in Bengaluru, BWSSB has identified 448 high-alert water-stressed pockets and launched a Rs 10.1-crore summer preparedness plan to prevent shortages.

According to IMD, daytime temperatures in Bengaluru are expected to hover between 29 degree celsius and 30 degree celsius. The city recorded 30 degree celsius on Sunday, while areas around KIA are likely to see a further rise in the coming days.

Unlike previous years, when emergency measures were triggered after complaints increased, BWSSB this time mapped vulnerable areas in advance. Most of the identified pockets are interior stretches in north and east Bengaluru, where residents depend heavily on groundwater and borewell sustainability remains uncertain. Officials said these are limited clusters where drinking water access could become critical if groundwater levels fall sharply between March and May. To address the risk, BWSSB will deploy 1,260 mini-water tanks across its four zones.

Each Sintex tank, with a capacity of 5,000 litres, will serve as a local drinking water buffer in stress-prone areas. In addition, 117 BWSSB tankers have been earmarked for deployment, while 104 private tankers have been identified to be hired as backup if required. About 60 additional tankers have also been arranged in anticipation of rising demand. Standard BWSSB tankers carry between 6,000 and 12,000 litres. To improve distribution, 91 additional Cauvery water filling points are planned. The Board has also arranged filling support for 196 reverse osmosis plants across the city.

Further, 47 water infrastructure works and 14 lake-filling projects are under way to strengthen local water availability during peak summer. Officials said this year's approach focuses on decentralised storage and quicker tanker turnaround. The early preparedness comes amid higher-than-normal Feb temperatures and uncertainty over groundwater levels. However, BWSSB chairman Ram Prasath Manohar V said the city is better placed than it was in 2024. "I don't see much summer difficulty for the city; we are well prepared this year, he said, pointing to improved Cauvery supply capacity.

Under the Cauvery Stage V augmentation, BWSSB now has a total pumping capacity of 773 million litres per day (MLD), of which around 400 MLD is currently being utilised. We still have more than 40% additional pumping capacity available. Even in a worst-case scenario where groundwater levels fall more than expected, we can match the requirement with Cauvery water, he said.

Min Reddy raises alarm over poor performance of e-buses

BENGALURU

The number of BMTC bus accidents in Bengaluru has been increasing in recent times. Most of the accidents are caused by BMTC electric buses (EV Bus).

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has expressed his anger over the maintenance of these electric buses and has written a second letter to Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

Lakhs of people rely on BMTC buses every day. BMTC has over 6,000 buses, out of which about 1,700 are electric buses.

But in recent times, EV buses have been causing a lot of accidents and brake failures. BMTC is running these buses on a contract basis from private companies on the GCC model as per the instructions of the central government. The company itself is filling the drivers in these buses. Therefore, no action is being taken against the driver who caused the accident. In addition, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has expressed dissatisfaction that the operations of BMTC Corporation are being affected due to lack of maintenance of electric buses and battery problems.

First letter yield no results: Min

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said 5-6 months ago, I had written a letter to Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy regarding the maintenance of electric buses. But there was no reply, assured that would solve the problem in 45 days. Hence, I have written a second letter.

Still, these electric buses are breaking down more often. EV buses are supposed to run 200 kilometers in a day. But the battery is only getting 100-120 kilometers. They are breaking down repeatedly, the Transport Minister has said.

2 more Vande Bharat sleeper rakes to be ready by next month

BENGALURU

While anticipation over the country's second Vande Bharat sleeper service continues, two more rakes are set to be readied by next month.

This rollout from the city-based public sector undertaking (PSU), Bharat Earth Movers Ltd (BEML), will enable the second service to be flagged off. As per BEML's original agreement with the integral coach factory (ICF) in Chennai, a total of 10 sleeper rakes with 16 coaches each were supposed to be delivered to the Indian Railways by March 31.

However, sources at ICF state the deadline will be missed. We expect the third and fourth rakes of Vande Bharat to be delivered before the end of March. For the six remaining rakes, we are trying to make sure to provide a rake every month from then on," an ICF official told.

As of now, a new tentative deadline for the initial batch of 10 coaches could be August. Even if it is delivered from Bengaluru, they will go through trials, testing and approvals, so there is no point in hurrying or rushing," the official added.

With demand for more Vande Bharat sleeper trains, especially from Karnataka, the railway ministry officially announced plans to manufacture 260 more rakes in the future. Answering a Lok Sabha question last week, Union minister for railways Ashwini Vaishnav stated, Vande Bharat sleeper train manufacturing programme is being executed in a phased manner through prototype development, trials and series production by BEML & Integral Coach Factory, Chennai and technology partners.

According to ICF, the project is only in the design stage and will only be taken up following the completion of the initial batch of 10 rakes. A BEML spokesperson confirmed that no such order was undertaken by the PSU as of now. Though there are official plans for the manufacture of 260 Vande Bharat sleeper rakes, sources within the ICF confirmed that 50 more rakes will be manufactured by the factory independently. These rakes, contrary to the rest, will have 24 coaches along with pantry cars.

Stat should ensure adequate medicine supply: BYV

BENGALURU

BJP state President and MLA BY Vijayendra has expressed concern about what would happen to the poor if the Chief Minister, who has given the opportunity to travel abroad to MLAs, also sends the Health Minister to Australia and New Zealand.

He spoke at a press conference on Monday at the BJP state office. The poor are currently suffering due to lack of medicines in government hospitals in rural areas. He alleged that information is being received that surgeries have been postponed in many places. The Health Minister criticized the Chief Minister for not paying attention to this. Vijayendra urged the state government to take steps for adequate supply of medicines before sending the MLAs out.

Unable to tolerate the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modiji, the Congress government had also stoned Janaushadhi Kendras. He said that the government had gone out to create an artificial shortage of medicines in rural areas and to do a fraudulent business called emergency purchase without calling for tenders, which has given rise to suspicion among the people of the state. He demanded that the state government and ministers should wake up and pay attention to this. This problem should be resolved immediately.

Siddaramaiah's son Yathindra said that after Shivaratri, DK Shivakumar will also be good; it will be good for everyone, and he criticized that he did not say that it will be good for the people of the state. He analysed that the Chief Minister's son had very sensitively exposed the Chief Minister's resignation from his post. Yathindra also gave a hint that he would join the cabinet if the Chief Minister resigns.

Above all, the Congress government led by Siddaramaiah has done injustice to the people of the entire state in the last two and a half years.

Accident claim: HC frees insurer, fixes liability on bike owner

BENGALURU

In a twist-filled compensation battle stemming from a 2009 road accident, the high court has held that the owner of an implicated motorcycle, and not the insurer must pay enhanced damages to an injured stenographer, after finding evidence of collusion and wrongful vehicle implication.

Justice P Sree Sudha, while enhancing the compensation, exonerated ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited from any liability, observing that the case involved a deliberate attempt to rope in an insured vehicle to secure wrongful financial gain.

The case dates back to August 30, 2009, when J Subramanya, a Stenographer at the Office of the Director, Karnataka Engineer Research Station in Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS), was travelling from Mysuru to Pandavapura. Near Hotel Mayura at Srirangapatna on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Road, his motorcycle was allegedly hit by a Hero Honda bike ridden rashly from the opposite direction. In his first complaint filed the very next day, he named one Suresh as the rider of the offending vehicle and claimed serious injuries that kept him off work for months. However, the narrative shifted dramatically just days later. A second complaint, filed on September 6, 2009 by a relative, cited an entirely different vehicle and another rider, S Shivakumar, as being involved in the crash, raising suspicions about the authenticity of the claim.

Initially, the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal at Pandavapura awarded a modest Rs 79,850 with 6 percent interest in 2013 against Subramanya's claim of Rs 20 lakh.

Mom tied up with maternity shoot, kid drowns in pond

BENGALURU

What began as a routine visit to a maternity photoshoot venue ended in grief for a woman from JP Nagar after her three-year-old boy drowned in a pond at a private studio in Giddenahalli, near Magadi Main Road. C Lakshveer had accompanied his mother, Swathi, who is seven months pregnant, to The Shire Studio, a location popular for maternity and pre-wedding shoots.

Swathi had gone to the studio with a pregnant friend who had booked the venue for her photoshoot. Swathi's husband Charan Raj, a software engineer, had travelled to the US for work about a week earlier. Before leaving, Swathi informed him that she was headed for the shoot and took Lakshveer along. According to investigators, Swathi was occupied with the photoshoot while the child was playing within the studio premises. The property has three small ponds. Police suspect Lakshveer may have wandered towards one of them and accidentally slipped into the water.

When Swathi could not find her son, she began searching the premises. He was later found in one of the ponds. Studio staff pulled him out and rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Police said the pond had more than 2ft of water. Lakshveer, who was about 3ft tall, may have been unable to regain his footing, possibly getting stuck in the mud, they said. A case of unnatural death has been registered at Madanayakanahalli police station based on a complaint filed by Swathi's father, Ramesh Babu. The complaint does not blame the studio management. The child's body was handed over to the family after autopsy at Nelamangala government hospital. Police said Charan Raj has been informed and is returning to Bengaluru. Officers added that the grandparents were in shock and could not provide detailed statements.

'SBMC begins clearance of dead, dangerous trees'

BENGALURU

On the orders of Commissioner KN Ramesh of South Bengaluru Municipal Corporation (SBMC), the Forest Unit of South Municipal Corporation has been carrying out an operation to remove dry and dangerous trees and dry and dangerous branches in the roads, parks and lakes of 6 assembly constituencies under the limits of Bangalore South Municipal Corporation from September 2, 2025 till now for the safety of the public.

Total details cleared in Bangalore South City Corporation are, Dried trees–79, Dried branches–789, Dangerous trees–48, Dangerous branches–600.

These operations are being carried out by the Forest Department of the South City Corporation with the aim of preventing accidents that may occur due to dried and dangerous trees and branches in the city and to protect the lives, property and safety of the public. Similar inspections will be conducted in the future too.

LIFELINE, NOT ANYMORE?

Indira canteen under fire over rubbery idlis, watery sambar

BENGALURU

Hailed once as a lifeline for the urban poor, Indira Canteens of Bengaluru are now battling complaints of poor food quality, staff shortages and crumbling infrastructure.

A visit to several Indira Canteens across the city reveal a worrying picture, watery sambar, undersized portions, locked toilets and erratic water supply were common place. Launched in 2017 to provide affordable meals, Rs 5 for breakfast and Rs 10 for lunch and dinner, the canteens cater to thousands of customers daily. As per guidelines, a breakfast should weigh 225 grams and meals 300 grams. However, customers allege these standards are rarely met. Bengaluru has 198 Indira Canteens out of which 169 are operational and 29 suspended.

At the Rajajinagar canteen, regular customer and daily wage worker Manjunath Gowda said, we come here even now only because it is affordable. But idlis are often hard, and sambar is watery. For Rs 10, we don't expect luxury, but at least basic quality should be maintained.

Rajanna Byali, a sanitation worker and another regular customer at KR Market canteen, echoed similar concerns. Hailing from Bidar, Rajanna came in search of work in Bengaluru and worked with BBMP for over two years. Sometimes the rice is undercooked, and the vegetables are very few.

Still, we eat because we cannot afford hotels, he said. We have a canteen inside the GBA building, but the challenge is that we are not always around the GBA head office. When I head out, I search for the nearest canteen, but find that most of them are poorly maintained and their food quality is poor. It is a challenge for us to cook three meals a day at home because of time and cost factors. But swallowing the morsel that is served here is painful.

The cooking staff say they are stretched thin. Shobha Murthy, who has been working at the Chalavadi Palya canteen for six years, said, "We cook and serve hundreds every day with very limited staff. If one person is absent, the whole system struggles."

QUICK READ

Boiled And Filtered Water Prevents Disease: Health Officer

BALLARI

District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. Yella Ramesh Babu has advised the public to drink boiled, cooled and filtered water to prevent possible cases of vomiting and diarrhoea during the summer season. In a press release, he stated that with the onset of summer and ongoing fairs and festivals, there is a higher risk of water- and food-borne diseases due to consumption of contaminated water and food. Illnesses such as vomiting, diarrhoea, typhoid, cholera, Hepatitis-A, giardia, salmonella, shigellosis, amoebiasis and E. coli infections can spread under such conditions.

Deadline Extended For Minority Residential School Admissions

BALLARI

The last date for submission of online applications for admission to Class 6 in Minority Morarji Desai Residential (English Medium) Schools and Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Residential (CBSE) Schools for the academic year 2026–27 has been extended till February 28. The schools are functioning under the Department of Minority Welfare in the district. Applications for free admission are being accepted through the Seva Sindhu online portal. Eligible students seeking admission to these prestigious residential institutions are advised to submit their applications before the revised deadline.

District-Level Sports Meet For Government Employees

BALLARI

The Karnataka State Government Employees Association, in association with the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Ballari, and the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, will organise a two-day district-level sports and cultural competition for state government employees on February 17 and 18 at the District Stadium in Ballari city. More than 1,200 state government officers and employees serving across Ballari district are expected to participate in the event. The competitions aim to promote physical fitness, teamwork, cultural talent and camaraderie among government staff working in various departments.

Satish Jarkiholi To Visit Ballari

PWD Minister to chair review meeting with officials on February 17

BELLARY

Public Works Department Minister and Belagavi District In-charge Minister Satish Jarkiholi will undertake an official visit to Ballari district on February 17 to review developmental works and ongoing infrastructure projects under his department.

According to a press statement issued by his close aide N. Rajappa, the minister is scheduled to hold a comprehensive progress review meeting with officials of the Public Works Department (PWD) concerning works undertaken in Ballari and Vijayanagara districts. The meeting will be held at 11 am

at the Hyatt Hotel located in Vidyanagar Township, Toranagallu.

Senior engineers, executive engineers, assistant executive engineers and other departmental officers from both districts are expected to attend the meeting. Officials will present detailed reports on the status of various road development projects, bridge constructions, government building works and other infrastructure initiatives currently being implemented under the PWD. Sources indicated that the minister will closely examine physical and financial progress of ongoing works, identify bottlenecks delaying completion, and issue necessary directions to ensure adherence to timelines. Special emphasis is likely to be laid on quality standards, proper utilization of allocated funds and speedy execution of pending projects. The visit is considered significant as Ballari and Vijayanagara districts are witnessing multiple infrastructure upgrades aimed at improving connectivity and public facilities. The review meeting is expected to provide an opportunity for field-level officers to present ground realities and seek guidance on resolving administrative or technical challenges. Minister Jarkiholi has consistently stressed transparency, accountability and efficiency in the execution of public works projects. Officials are hopeful that the review will help accelerate development activities and enhance coordination among departments for effective implementation of government schemes in the region.

Congress MLA Ravikumar Gowda Ganiga voices strong support for KPCC chief.

MANDYA

Congress MLA Ravikumar Gowda Ganiga has asserted that as many as 136 legislators are in favour of Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) President D. K. Shivakumar, describing him as a mass leader who enjoys overwhelming support within the party.

Speaking to reporters, Ganiga said the majority of Congress MLAs stand firmly behind Shivakumar's leadership and organisational capabilities. Out of the total strength, 136 MLAs are in support of DK Shivakumar. His contribution to strengthening the party at the grassroots level cannot be ignored, he stated.

Ganiga emphasized that Shivakumar played a crucial role in reviving the Congress in Karnataka and mobilising cadre strength across the

state. According to him, the party's recent electoral successes were made possible due to collective leadership, with Shivakumar's efforts in building booth-level networks and energising workers proving decisive. The MLA also pointed out that internal discussions within the party are a normal democratic process and should not be misinterpreted as divisions. Congress is a disciplined party. Decisions are taken collectively under the guidance of the high command. However, it is a fact that DK Shivakumar commands strong backing among legislators, he added.

Political observers note that statements such as these assume significance amid periodic speculation regarding leadership dynamics within the Karnataka Congress. Ganiga maintained that the party remains united and focused on governance and implementation of its guarantee schemes for the welfare of the people. He further appealed to party workers to remain united and avoid engaging in unnecessary speculation. Our priority is to deliver on promises made to the people of Karnataka. Leadership matters will be resolved within the party framework, he said. The remarks are likely to intensify discussions within political circles, even as Congress leaders continue to reiterate that the government remains stable and committed to development initiatives across the state.

Officials Caught Napping At KDP Meeting

KOPPAL

The District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (KDP) meeting, convened to review developmental works and address public grievances, witnessed an embarrassing scene in Koppal on Sunday as some officials were reportedly seen sleeping and using mobile phones during the proceedings.

The meeting was held at the JH Patel Hall in the District Administrative Building under the leadership of Koppal District In-charge Minister Shivraj Thangadgi. The KDP meeting is considered a crucial platform where elected representatives and senior officials discuss the progress of government schemes, infrastructure projects and district-level issues.

However, during the session, certain officials allegedly displayed a lack of seriousness. While discussions on key development works were underway, a few officers were seen dozing off, while others were engrossed in their mobile phones. The inattentive behaviour reportedly drew criticism from participants present at the meeting. Sources said the meeting covered important topics including ongoing infrastructure projects, welfare scheme implementation and pending works across the district. The KDP forum is meant to ensure accountability and coordination between departments to accelerate development activities. The alleged casual attitude of some officials has therefore raised concerns about commitment and administrative discipline. Observers noted that such meetings require full attention from all departments, as decisions taken during KDP sessions directly impact public welfare and district planning. The incident has sparked discussion among political circles and citizens regarding the seriousness with which review meetings are conducted. While no official statement has been issued regarding the conduct of the officers, the episode has highlighted the need for greater professionalism and responsibility during high-level review meetings intended to address the district's pressing development concerns.

Ten New City Buses Launched In Ballari

Enhanced urban transport services to operate across seven routes.

BALLARI

In a major boost to urban public transport, ten new city buses have been allocated to the Ballari division to provide affordable, systematic and safe transportation facilities to city passengers. The announcement was made by Divisional Controller Inayat Bagban of the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Ballari Division.

With the addition of these ten buses, services will now be operated on seven routes within Ballari city, covering ten schedules daily. The newly introduced buses will ply on key routes including S.P. Circle–Allipur, S.P. Circle–Trauma Care Centre, S.P. Circle–Bandihatti, OPD–Bisilahalli, OPD–Hussain Nagar, S.P. Circle–Prashanth Nagar and New Bus Stand–Sanganakallu.

Important junctions and landmarks covered under these routes include Durgamma Temple, CBT, Gadagi Chennappa Circle, BSNL City Bus Stop, Railway Circle, H.R.G. Circle, Rangamandira, Valmiki Bhavan, Kaul Bazaar, TB Sanatorium, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Vasavi School, Fire Station, Women Police Station, Sangam Circle, District Administrative Building, Patel Nagar and Taranath Hospital, among others. These routes are expected to significantly improve connectivity across residential, commercial and institutional areas of the city.

Each new bus has been procured at a cost of ₹39 lakh and is equipped with modern passenger-friendly features. The buses have large LED destination boards, automated entry and exit doors, LED interior lighting and seating capacity for 40 passengers. For safety, four CCTV cameras, automatic fire extinguishing systems, reverse parking alarms and GPS-based location tracking with panic buttons have been installed.

Powered by 187 HP BS-6 engines, the buses are built in accordance with Automotive Industry Standard AIS-052 bus code norms. With the addition of these vehicles, the total number of city buses operating in Ballari has increased to 25. Passengers can avail a daily bus pass for ₹50 allowing unlimited travel, while monthly passes are available at ₹810 for general passengers and ₹725 for senior citizens. Services will operate from 7.15 am to 8.30 pm daily via the Railway Station route. Authorities have urged citizens to make maximum use of the improved city transport facilities.

Woman Injured In Daylight Attack

SHIVAMOGGA

A shocking incident of assault has come to light from Almane village in Thirthahalli taluk of Shivamogga district, where a young woman was allegedly attacked with a broken beer bottle by a youth after she rejected his love proposal on Valentine's Day.

According to police sources, the incident occurred on February 14 but came to light later. The accused, identified as Swaroop, had reportedly confessed his love to the young woman on the occasion of Valentine's Day. However, when she refused to accept his proposal, he allegedly assaulted her in a fit of rage.

The young woman sustained serious injuries to her hand and neck during the attack. She was initially rushed to J.C. Hospital in Thirthahalli town, where she received primary treatment. Due to the severity of her injuries, doctors referred her to Manipal Hospital for advanced treatment. Her condition is said to be stable but serious.

Following the attack, tensions escalated in the area. Upon learning about the assault, friends of the injured woman allegedly confronted and attacked Swaroop. He too sustained injuries, including a head injury, during the scuffle. The accused youth is currently undergoing treatment at J.C. Hospital in Thirthahalli.

A case has been registered against Swaroop at the Thirthahalli Police Station under relevant sections of the law. Police have initiated an investigation into the incident and are recording statements from witnesses.

The incident has sparked concern among residents, highlighting the dangers of obsessive behaviour and violent reactions to rejection. Authorities have appealed to the public to resolve personal disputes peacefully and warned that strict action will be taken against those involved in acts of violence. Further investigation is underway to ascertain the complete

sequence of events surrounding the incident.

Mandatory Registration For Shops

GADAG

All shopkeepers and commercial establishment owners within the limits of Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council have been directed to mandatorily register their establishments under the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961 and Rules, 1963.

In a public notice, Labour Inspector Umesh S. Hullannavar stated that registration is compulsory for all shops and commercial establishments operating within the municipal limits, irrespective of whether they employ workers or not. Establishments that have not yet completed registration with the Labour Inspector's Office, Gadag 2nd Circle, must immediately initiate the process.

Authorities have clarified that even businesses functioning without employees are required to obtain registration under the Act. Owners and entrepreneurs must apply online through the Karnataka Government's e-Karmika portal and submit the prescribed fee along with necessary documents to secure the registration certificate.

Crores spent, yet villagers struggle for drinking water supply

HAVERI

The ambitious Har Ghar Jal project, launched under the Jal Jeevan Mission with the objective of providing safe drinking water to every rural household, has reportedly fallen into disrepair in Neshvi village of Rattihalli taluk in Haveri district.

Though the project was implemented at an estimated cost of around ₹50 lakh, villagers allege that even after nearly five years, water is not being supplied to individual homes. Over 600 houses in the village were fitted with pipelines under the scheme, raising hopes that residents would receive regular tap water connections. However, those expectations have now turned into disappointment.

Residents say that despite crores of rupees being spent across various villages under the Har Ghar Jal initiative, the ground reality remains far from satisfactory. In Neshvi village, pipelines have been laid to doorsteps, but taps remain dry. As a result, people are forced to depend on public taps and standposts for their daily water needs.

Villagers expressed frustration that instead of enjoying the promised door-to-door supply, they now queue up at common water points. In some areas, public taps are overcrowded as families gather with pots and containers to collect water.

Court awards death penalty to three men in Israeli woman rape, murder case

KOPPAL

A court in Karnataka on Monday sentenced three men to death for sexually assaulting an Israeli tourist and murdering a youth in Koppal district last year. The Gangavathi Civil Court convicted Mallesh alias Handi Malla, Sharanabasava and Chaitanya Sai on February 7 and pronounced the sentence on February 16. According to the prosecution, the crime occurred near Sanapur on March 6, 2025. A homestay owner had taken tourists — Pankaj from Maharashtra, Bibhas from Odisha, Daniel from the US, and an Israeli woman — for stargazing near the Tungabhadra canal. The three accused allegedly arrived on a motorcycle and picked a fight over a financial dispute. They then pushed the three men into the canal and threw stones to prevent them from escaping. Bibhas Kumar drowned, while Daniel rescued Pankaj. The assailants raped the homestay owner and the Israeli woman and fled with mobile phones, cash and a camera.

Public Prosecutor Nagalakshmi said the case involved gang rape, murder, attempted murder, robbery and extortion. Judge Sadananda Nagappa Naik awarded capital punishment under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita and life imprisonment till natural death for gang rape. The convicts can appeal.

RAMANAGARA UIDF INSPECTION

Complete Works Swiftly, Maintain Quality: Shashi

RAMANAGARA

City Municipal Council President K. Sheshadri (Shashi) has directed engineers and contractors to maintain quality standards and complete ongoing development works at the earliest, warning that disciplinary action would be taken if complaints are received regarding substandard execution.

On Monday, he inspected concrete road construction works being carried out under the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) within the city limits. Accompanied by the Municipal Commissioner, council members, officials and staff, he visited several wards and interacted with local residents to hear their grievances.

The inspection covered Ward 2, Ward 27 (Vivekananda Nagar), Ward 25 (Ijoor) and Malleswara Layout, among other areas where works are in progress. During the visit, residents pointed out certain lapses and inconveniences caused by ongoing construction. Taking note of the concerns, Sheshadri instructed officials and contractors to ensure that no complaints arise and to strictly adhere to prescribed quality norms.

He emphasized that road development works should be executed with proper curing and technical standards. After digging up roads, works must be completed promptly and safely to minimize inconvenience to the public. Efforts should be made to reduce adverse effects of road works and ensure smooth movement for residents, he said.

Speaking to reporters later, Sheshadri stated that development works worth ₹82 crore have been undertaken under UIDF grants, including construction of concrete roads, drains and retaining walls. So far, over 60 per cent of the works under two phases have been completed, while about 40 per cent of the second phase is nearing completion.

He clarified that it is not..

QUICK READ

Eliminate Atrocities, Untouchability: Dr L Murthy

MANDYA

Chairman of the Karnataka State Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission, Dr L. Murthy, has directed district authorities to take strict and immediate measures to resolve atrocity cases and eradicate the practice of untouchability from the district. Speaking at a review meeting held at the city's Travellers' Bungalow with the Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, Dr. Murthy stated that around 46 to 47 atrocity cases from Mandya district have been registered with the Commission. He emphasized that serious legal obstacles in such cases must be addressed promptly and justice delivered without delay. He instructed concerned officials to examine grievances of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, including civic and land-related issues such as access roads, burial grounds, survey corrections and disputes, on priority. Officials must respond sensitively and act decisively to ensure protection of constitutional rights, he said.

Power Outage Scheduled In Mandya

MANDYA

Power supply will be disrupted in several villages under the Hampapura and Basaralu 66/11 KV power distribution centres on February 18 due to quarterly maintenance works. According to a press release issued by the Executive Engineer, the maintenance work has been scheduled at the 66/11 KV Hampapura and Basaralu power substations. As a result, electricity supply will remain suspended from 9 am to 6 pm on the said day. Under the Hampapura power distribution centre, the affected areas include Keragodu, Doddagarudanahalli, Bilidegalu, Mudaganduru, Maragowdanahalli, B. Hosur, Hampapura, Kalkantidoddi, Soudanahalli, Bettahalli, Beechanahalli, Puradakoppalu, M. Honnenahalli, Manuganahalli, Upparakanahalli, Hanaganahalli, Gudigenahalli and surrounding villages. Registrations Invited for Competitions on World Rotary Day

Krishnappa Inaugurates Jana-Jaaniyara Nage Festival

Thousands celebrate Shivaratri at all-night cultural event in Vijayanagar

VIJAYANAGAR

The Jana-Jaaniyara Nage Jagarane Mahotsava, an all-night cultural and comedy festival, was inaugurated by Vijayanagar MLA M. Krishnappa at Chandrashekar Playground in Hampinagar, Vijayanagar. The event witnessed participation from thousands of people who gathered with their families to celebrate Maha Shivaratri in a unique and vibrant manner.

The programme commenced with special pooja, deeparadhane and chanting of Shiva namas to mark the auspicious occasion of Maha Shivaratri. The devotional atmosphere set the tone for the night-long celebration that seamlessly blended spirituality, culture and entertainment.

As part of the Nage Jagarane (comedy vigil), several renowned humorists enthralled the audience with their performances. Popular comedian Gangavathi Pranesh, along with M.S. Narasimhamurthy, Krishnegowda, Mimicry Dayanand, Joshi and Basavaraj Mamani, kept the crowd engaged with witty satire and laughter-filled acts. A magic show, ventriloquism performance, quiz competitions and a humorous skit portraying former U.S. President Donald Trump added to the entertainment quotient of the festival.

During the event, noted Bharatanatyam artiste Suma Sudhindra was felicitated for her contribution to classical dance. She later presented a captivating Bharatanatyam performance, which received warm appreciation from the audience.

Govindarajanagar MLA Priyakrishna, Congress leader Pradeep Krishnappa and several local dignitaries were present on the occasion. Organisers stated that the festival was conceived to celebrate Maha Shivaratri in a distinctive way by bringing together devotion, culture and humour on a single platform.

The grand turnout and enthusiastic participation reflected the public's appreciation for innovative cultural celebrations that foster community bonding and festive spirit.

Call For 'Govt Souharda Salons' In Villages

Savita Samaja leader seeks action against untouchability, private salon dominance.

GADAG

Gadag District Savita Samaja President Krishna H. Hadapada has called for the establishment of Government Souharda Salons in every gram panchayat across the district, stating that the move would promote social harmony and ensure dignity in service delivery, especially to Dalit communities.

In a press statement, Hadapada said breaking the vicious cycle of caste discrimination and living in harmony with Dalit brethren is the collective resolve of the Savita community. Humanity is our supreme religion. Loving and respecting fellow human beings is our culture.

Dalit brothers are like our own family members. Providing them respectful grooming services is our constitutional duty, he asserted.

He alleged that in some villages, vested interests belonging to upper caste groups are exerting pressure on members of the Savita community and continuing to encourage untouchability practices. Terming such attitudes as outdated and inhumane, he warned that anyone obstructing harmonious service or issuing threats would face legal action under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Hadapada demanded that the government provide adequate protection to barbers who are willing to offer services without discrimination. He further urged the state to establish Government Souharda Salons in every gram panchayat and recognize Savita community barbers working there as government employees to ensure economic security and social protection.

He announced that a memorandum highlighting these demands would soon be submitted to the Chief Minister through the Gadag Deputy Commissioner.

Mathematics Is Language Of God: KS Narendra Babu

KOLAR

Renowned astrologer and advocate K. S. Narendra Babu stated that mathematics is the very language of God, asserting that the universe itself was created through mathematical principles.

He was speaking at a simple felicitation programme organised by citizens at his office in Kolar, where he delivered a discourse on astrology and its scientific foundations. Emphasising the deep connection between numbers and existence, Narendra Babu explained that the structure of time itself reflects mathematical precision — 24 hours in a day, seven days in a week, 30 days in a month and 365 days in a year.

Every calculation and numerical pattern in the universe follows a predetermined order. Behind every number lies a profound background. Through mathematics, one can experience the existence of the divine, he said.

He further elaborated that an individual's date, time and place of birth are all governed by numerical values, and these numbers help reveal various aspects of a person's life. By preparing and analysing the Panchanga (Hindu almanac), astrologers interpret planetary positions and calculate predictions related to personality, profession, marriage, family, education, financial status and social life.

Narendra Babu noted that mathematics forms the foundation of astrology, and deeper study of this divine language continues to uncover many mysteries.

He observed that in recent times, the younger generation has shown increasing interest in tantra, mantra and yantra practices, and efforts are underway to simplify complex astrological calculations for wider understanding.

However, he cautioned that interpreting planetary influences requires intellectual depth and analytical skill. If astrology is practised without proper knowledge and wisdom, it may mislead people.

District-level programme to review implementation of five guarantee schemes

KOPPAL

The district-level Guarantee Workshop and Guarantee Utsav focusing on the implementation of the Karnataka Government's five guarantee schemes will be held on February 17 at 10 am at Madhushree Garden in Koppal. The programme is being jointly organized by the district administration and Zilla Panchayat, Koppal.

Backward Classes Welfare, Kannada and Culture Minister and Koppal District In-charge Minister Shivraj Thangadgi will inaugurate the event. Koppal MLA K. Raghavendra Hitnal will preside over the function.

Several prominent leaders are expected to attend, including Leader of Opposition Chief Whip and Kushtagi MLA Doddanagouda Hanamagouda Patil, Chief Minister's Economic Advisor and Yelburga MLA Basavaraj Rayareddy, and Chairman of the Karnataka State Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority H.M. Revanna. State-level Vice-Chairpersons S.R. Meharoz Khan (Kalaburagi Division), S.R. Patil (Belagavi Division), Dr. Pushpa Amarnath (Mysuru Division), Suraj Hegde (Bengaluru-1 Division) and MLC Dinesh Gooligowda (Bengaluru-2 Division) will also be present.

Koppal MP K. Rajasekhar Hitnal, Gangavathi MLA G. Janardhan Reddy, MLCs Shashil G. Namoshi, Dr. Chandrashekhar B. Patil, Sharangouda Annadanagouda Patil Bayyapur and Hemalatha Nayak are listed as chief guests. Chairpersons of district and taluk-level guarantee implementation authorities from Gangavathi, Koppal, Karatagi, Kushtagi, Yelburga, Kukanoor and Kanakagiri will participate along with committee members.

Gadag Taluk Meeting Ahead Of Guarantee Convention

GADAG

As part of preparations for the upcoming district-level Guarantee Schemes Convention, a preliminary meeting of Gadag taluk has been convened on February 17, 2026, at 10 am. The meeting will be held at the District Congress Office located in the premises of the Cotton Sale Society building in the city.

The preparatory meeting has been organized ahead of the Guarantee Workshop and Utsav scheduled to be held on February 18, 2026, at Swami Vivekananda Sabha Bhavan in Gadag. The main event is being organized jointly by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat and the District-level Five Guarantee Schemes Implementation Authority.

Law, Tourism and District Incharge Minister H. K. Patil will preside over the preliminary meeting. D.R. Patil, Vice-Chairman of the State Decentralisation Planning and Development Committee, will also be present.

The organizers have urged all former and sitting MLAs of the Congress party, district office-bearers, block Congress presidents and members to attend the meeting. Representatives from Zilla Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat, Gram Panchayat, APMC bodies, municipal councils, town panchayats and city councils have also been invited.

Leaders and members from various frontal organizations including Mahila Congress, Youth Congress, SC/ST wing, Minority wing, Student Congress, Seva Dal, Backward Classes wing, Social Media wing, Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Raj Sangathan, Ex-Servicemen wing, Fishermen wing, Labour wing, INTUC, Legal and Human Rights cell, Kisan and Khet Mazdoor wing, Doctors' cell, Professionals' wing, Graduates and Teachers' wing, Policy and Research Training wing, Differently Abled wing, Legal Reforms wing, IT and Data cell, and Media and Communication department have been requested to participate.

₹1.60 Crore Released for Integrated Agriculture Clusters: MP Sagar Khandre

BIDAR

In a major boost to the agricultural sector, Rs. 1.60 crore has been released for the development of Integrated Agriculture Clusters in the district, said Bidar Lok Sabha MP Sagar Khandre.

He was speaking on Monday after distributing grant cheques to selected cluster federations during the District Development Coordination and Monitoring (DISHA) Committee meeting held at the Zilla Panchayat hall to review the progress of Centrally sponsored schemes.

Providing details, the MP said that a total of 24 clusters have been identified under the Integrated Agriculture Clusters Scheme in the district. In the first phase, eight clusters have been selected and each has been sanctioned Rs. 20 lakh, amounting to a total of Rs. 1.60 crore.

He said that in the initial phase, five clusters in Humnabad, Basavakalyan, Aurad, Kamalnagar and Bhalki taluks have already received Rs. 20 lakh each. The remaining three federations — Krishna Sanjeevini GPLF of Janawada in Bidar taluk, Nirnada Niran Sanjeevini GPLF of Chitaguppa taluk, and Vaibhavi Sanjeevini GPLF of Gorta in Hulasur taluk — were handed over cheques during the meeting.

Emphasising the need for collective farming practices, Khandre said farmers must become self-reliant and make effective use of government schemes. We are committed to ensuring that every agriculture cluster in the district progresses on the path of development, he stated.

Minister chairs KDP meet, pushes 30-bed hospitals in all hoblis

KOPPAL

District In-charge Minister Shivraj S. Thangadgi directed officials to ensure that healthcare services reach people quickly and efficiently by establishing at least 30-bed Community Health Centres (CHCs) in all hoblis of Koppal district.

He was presiding over the third quarterly Karnataka Development Programme (KDP) progress review meeting for 2025–26, including the 20-point programme, held at the J.H. Patel Hall of the Zilla Panchayat on Monday.

Currently, 12 hoblis in the district have Community Health Centres, while eight more require new CHCs. The minister instructed health officials to submit proposals for upgrading existing centres and constructing new ones with adequate medical officers, staff and essential infrastructure. He assured that funding would be provided by the state government, with additional support expected from the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board.

Thangadgi emphasized regular inspections of Primary Health Centres, CHCs, taluk hospitals, women and child hospitals and other facilities to address deficiencies promptly. He directed KIMS authorities to open additional counters to reduce long queues for outpatient registrations at the district hospital. Cleanliness must be prioritised, and no patient should be forced to purchase medicines from outside, he warned, adding that legal action would be taken if such complaints arise.

Highlighting coordination issues among hospital authorities, he urged doctors to work with humanity and commitment. Teachers shape lives and doctors save lives. Medical professionals must serve with compassion, he said. The minister also reviewed horticulture expansion in the district, irrigation initiatives, welfare hostel management, scholarship disbursal and SSLC result improvement. He stressed ensuring adequate drinking water and fodder availability during summer. MLAs K. Raghavendra Hitnal and G. Janardhana Reddy raised issues regarding hospital sanitation and the need for a police station at Anegundi, respectively. The minister assured necessary follow-up action.

Senior officials including Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itnal, CEO Varnit Negi and district-level officers were present at the meeting.

NAME CHANGE

I, **POOJA**, D/o Nandikeshwar Bhat, residing at No. 40, 1 "B" Main, Srinivasa Nagara, Pattegara Palya, Bangalore-560072, have changed my name to **POOJA N BHAT**, vide affidavit dated: 03.02.2026, before Notary H.R.KARUNAKAR, Bangalore

NAME CHANGE

I, **ANTONY NAVEEN KUMAR DOMNIC**, S/o Domnic Resident of No.80, Johnbull Road, Rudrappa Gargan Vivek nagar, Bengaluru -560 047 have changed my name to **ANTONY NAVEEN KUMAR**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 16.02.2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, NAGESH GOPALKRISHNA YELEKYATANAHALLI (old name), a resident of No 245, 3RD CROSS, NEW BANK COLONY, NEAR SOUDHAMINI, KALYANA MANTAPPA, KONANAKUNTE, BENGALURU 560062, Karnataka - INDIA, have changed my name to NAGESH GOPALA KRISHNA YELEKYATANAHALLI (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 16-02-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAMMED ASADULLAH (old name), a resident of No 208/1, Teachers Colony, Royal Public School Road, karcharkana Halli, HBR LAYOUT, Kalyan Nagar Post, Bangalore 560043, Karnataka - INDIA, have changed my name to MOHAMMED ASADULLAH ABDULLAH (NEW Name) vide affidavit dated 16-02-2026, sworn advocate and notary Mohammed Hussain K.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to public at large **Mr.Ramakrishnaiah S/O Late Chikkaelagaiah,** Residing at Jogaradoddi, Bidadi,Ramanagar, Bangalore South , Bangalore Karnataka - 562109. He has lost the Registered Original Gift Deed of Doc No.RMN-1-03460-2003-04 dated on 24-03-2004 he has lost at Near Bidadi bus stop Accordingly he has lodged the complainant on Bangalore South Police with E-Lost dated 16/02/2026 Report No.2065628/2026

SCHEDULE PROPERTY : All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Khaneshumari No.237/483, Situated at Joraradoddi Village, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagar Bangalore East Taluk, Measuring East to West : 23 feet and North to South 80 feet, in all measuring 1840 Sq,ft bounded on **East by:** Road, **West by:** House of Anjanappa, **North by:** Road, **South by:** my balance propertylf anyone finding the aforesaid document is hereby requested to handover the same to our office at the address mentioned hereunder.

HARISHA .S, Advocate
 # 1479. DRLS PLAZA.
UNION BANK BUILDING. T DASARAHALLI,
Bengaluru-560057. Mob No. 9060950265.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the General, public that my client by name Venkategowda.N S/o Narayanappa, are intending to purchase the property mentioned herein below from its lawful owner Syed Sadiq S/o Syed Yaseen Peer and family members, and the same is acquired on the basis of anestral properties. If any persons/s/Authority is having any manner of rights or claims or objections for the sale of the Schedule property, they may contact the undersigned with a relevant documents within FIFTEEN DAYS from the date of this Public Notice, failing which my clients will proceed with the sale transaction, as if there are no objections from any persons.

SCHEDULE

All that peace and parcel of the Property bearing Sy.No.138/4 measuring 0-17 guntas, Sy.No.140/1 measuring 0-11 guntas, situated at Thippuru Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and having common boundaries:- East:- Land of Narasimhamurthy West:- Road North: Land of Venkateshgowda South:- Land of Jayaramaiah

All that peace and parcel of the Property bearing Sy.No.141/1 measuring 0-12 guntas, Sy.No.141/2 measuring 0-12 guntas and Sy.No.141/3 measuring 0-08 guntas, situated at Thippuru Village, Doddabelavangala Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and having common boundaries:- East:- Land of Venkataramaiah. West:- Road. North Land of Nagamani and Narasimhamurthy South:- Land of Narasimhamurthy

Sri.Vijaykumar.M.V Advocate No.4, 1st Floor, Government Employees Association Building, Next to PLD Bank, Near Taluk Office Circle Doddaballapur Town.
Mo: 9971225599/8722504106

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Smt.Rihana W/o P D Lathif Khan, Residing at Maraganukunte Village, Maraganukunte Grama Panchayath, Guluru Hobali,Bagepalli Taluk, Chikkaballapura District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Photo copy ,have lost following Document of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Maraganukunte Village, Maraganukunte Grama Panchayath, Guluru Hobali,Bagepalli Taluk, Chikkaballapura District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Sale Deed,Dated;-02-03-2017, Regd Sale Deed Executed by Sri.P D Lathif Khan S/o Late.Dhavud Khan,In Favour of Sri.M N Papachari S/o Late.Nanjundachari,In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.BGP-1-04524-2016-17,CD No.BGPD92,in regd before of the SRO Bagepalli , in respect of Property bearing E-Swathu Form No.9 and 11A,E-Swathu No.152800103300120324,Property No.226/4,situated at Maraganukunte Village, Maraganukunte Grama Panchayath, Guluru Hobali,Bagepalli Taluk, Chikkaballapura District, measuring East to West 18.288 Meters, and North to South 15.24 Meters, Total Measuring 167.23 Sq Meters ,Building Area 111.48 Sq Meters, police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2054656/2026, DATED;-10-02-2026, and complaint dated;-10-02-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.

Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-10-02-2026

K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL,
ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY,
BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA
TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD
CHINTHAMANI.M;-9980110692

Document Lost

This is to inform to General public that my client Smt, Uma W/o Nagesh, Residing at Sadahalli Village, Kannamangala Village Pancahayth, Kasaba Hobali, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru rural District, I am the Owner of the Below said Property,while Sale Deed for taken Digital copy ,have lost following Documents of property pertating to below Mentioned property Situated at Sadahalli Village, Kasaba Hobali, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru rural District, had published the factum of lost of her Original Regd Sale Deed,Dated;-30-01-2012, Regd Sale Deed Executed by Sri.B.Krishnappa s/o late, Bachappa, and his family Members, in Favour of Smt, Uma W/o Nagesh,In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.DNH-1-06793/2011-12, IN CDNO.DNHD 254, In regd before of the SRO Devanahalli ,in Respect of Property Bearing Devanahalli Taluk, Kasaba hobali, Sadahalli Village, Khanishmari Janjar no.138, Property no.115, in Measuring 30x33 feets,and Regd Sale Deed,Dated;-10-09-2008, Regd Sale Deed, Executed by Smt, Munilakshmamma w/o Venkatesh, in favour of Sri.B.Krishnappa s/o late, Bachappa, In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.DNH-1-03147/2008-09, IN CDNO.DNHD 161, In regd before of the SRO Devanahalli, and Regd Sale Deed,Dated;-09-08-2004, Regd Sale Deed, Executed by Smt, Komala w/o G.K.Subramanyam, and their family Members, in Favour of Smt, Munilakshmamma w/o Venkatesh, In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.DNH-1-01389/2004-05, IN CDNO.DNHD 18, In regd before of the SRO Devanahalli, and Regd Sale Deed,Dated;-20-11-1984, Regd Sale Deed, Executed by Sri, S.V.Sathyanarayana s/o Late, S.Venkatarao, in Favour of Smt, Komala w/o G.K.Subramanyam, In regd as Book No.1,Volume No.1307, in Pages 70-71, in regd as Document no.1052/84-85, Dated;-05-12-1984, In regd before of the SRO Devanahalli,police complaint have been filed with regards to loss of the above said Document vide complaint in NCR NO. Lost Report no.2065818/2026, DATED;-16-02-2026, and complaint dated;-16-02-2026, by respective person,if anybody finds these Document please inform within 7 Days in Below mentioned Address.

Place;-Chinthamani,
Date;-16-02-2026

K.S.HARISH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
Office: NEAR KISHORE SCHOOL,
ABOVE APPOLO PHARMACY,
BESIDE SANTHOSHI MATHA
TEMPLE, BANGALORE MAIN ROAD
CHINTHAMANI.M;-9980110692

Bill Gates, AP CM review natural farming, AI innov

YSRCP asks what advantages Bill Gates' visit will offer to the people of Andhra Pradesh

AMRAVATI

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates visited an agricultural field in Undavalli on Monday, accompanied by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.

The duo observed crops cultivated through natural farming techniques and were briefed on how the state is integrating Artificial Intelligence into agriculture. Officials explained that AI tools are helping farmers monitor crop health, increase productivity, and receive timely guidance based on soil conditions, crop type, and market prices.

CM Naidu lauded farmers for blending traditional methods with modern technology, calling them pioneers in adopting innovation while preserving heritage practices. Gates received a warm traditional welcome and was shown demonstrations of drones being used to improve farming efficiency. Naidu also recalled his first meeting with Gates in 1997, when he shared his vision for building a technology ecosystem and later presented his Swarna Andhra 2047 initiative, aimed at long-term development and prosperity.

The visit included discussions on potential collaboration with the Gates Foundation to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance the overall quality of life in the state. Naidu emphasized Andhra Pradesh's ongoing efforts to empower farmers through technology while encouraging environmentally friendly and natural farming methods.

The engagement highlighted the state's commitment to combining tradition with innovation, demonstrating how modern tools like AI and drones can work alongside time-tested agricultural practices. Gates' visit underscored the global interest in Andhra Pradesh's model of sustainable and technology-driven agriculture, setting an example for other regions to follow.

YSRCP questions purpose of Gates' visit

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) on Monday questioned the purpose of Bill Gates' visit to Andhra Pradesh, alleging the government is focusing on publicity over pressing issues in welfare hostels. Party spokesperson TJR Sudhakar Babu asked what tangible benefits Gates' visit would bring to the people and criticized repeated displays of graphics and visuals of the proposed capital city without real progress on the ground. YSRCP highlighted ongoing health concerns in welfare hostels, citing nearly 900 students injured or hospitalised over 14 months due to illness or alleged food poisoning, including rat bite incidents. The party accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of using Gates' visit to divert attention from governance failures. Sudhakar Babu demanded that Gates, along with government leaders including Education Minister Nara Lokesh and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, visit welfare hostels and eat the same midday meals as students to understand the issues firsthand.

'Extremely tragic': Shah condoles Bhiwadi chemical factory fire

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday expressed grief over the death of seven people in a chemical factory fire in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan.

He offered condolences to the families of the deceased and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured. Shah said the local administration is providing all possible medical assistance to the victims.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also expressed sorrow, calling the incident tragic and urging prompt care for the injured. The fire occurred in the Khairthal-Tijara district, with officials confirming that seven people were burned to death and several others injured.

Rajasthan Congress President Govind Singh Dotasra criticized the state government, saying such accidents have become common. He recalled a similar chemical tanker fire in Ajmer that killed 16 people and demanded urgent action to prevent future tragedies.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma described the incident as "heartbreaking" and directed the district administration to carry out relief and rescue operations. He prayed for the departed souls and wished speedy recovery for the injured. Authorities continue to investigate the cause of the fire and assess damages.

The Bhiwadi fire has once again highlighted safety concerns in industrial areas, prompting political leaders to call for stricter regulations and immediate action to protect workers and nearby residents.

US Ambassador Gor visits Western Command HQ

CHANDIGARH

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor on Monday landed in Chandigarh and said he looks forward to visiting the Western Command of the Indian Army.

Sharing his plans on X, he wrote, "Just landed in Chandigarh. Looking forward to visiting the Western Command of the Indian Army."

The visit highlights the growing defence partnership between the United States and India. Earlier, Gor welcomed Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), during his visit to India, underscoring the focus on strengthening cooperation in defence and security.

From February 3–4, India and the US held the 24th Joint Technical Group Plenary at DRDO headquarters in New Delhi. The meeting reviewed ongoing collaboration in defence science and technology and explored ways to advance critical and emerging defence technologies under the India-US Major Defence Partnership framework.

In November, Indian Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi visited the United States, holding high-level discussions on maritime security, operational interoperability, and joint humanitarian and disaster response efforts.

In October, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth signed a ten-year Defence Framework Agreement in Kuala Lumpur, marking a new chapter in India-US military cooperation.

The agreement sets a long-term roadmap for joint projects, capacity building, and strategic collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.

Ambassador Gor's visit to the Western Command reinforces the ongoing efforts to deepen bilateral defence ties and strengthen strategic cooperation between India and the United States.

Gogoi calls Bhupen Borah an asset to Cong

GUWAHATI

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi praised Assam PCC chief Bhupen Kumar Borah, calling him a party asset.

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Monday lauded Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) chief Bhupen Kumar Borah, describing him as a "strong Congress leader" and an "asset" to the party amid internal discussions. Speaking to reporters in Guwahati, Gogoi said senior leaders had a detailed three-hour meeting with Borah to address concerns.

"Bhupen Kumar Borah is our asset. He is fighting against evil. If any wrong was done, as a brother, I apologize to him," Gogoi said. He also confirmed that Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, spoke with Borah.

Earlier in the day, Borah confirmed his resignation from the Congress, stating that he had sent his resignation to the party high command but chose not to provide immediate reasons. "I don't deem it necessary to speak on why I resigned. I have certainly resigned and sent my resignation to the high command. Whenever I think it necessary, I will call you and speak in detail," he told reporters.

Borah hinted that his resignation stemmed from internal issues beginning with the Behali episode. He also expressed dissatisfaction with internal decision-making, especially regarding participation in the Majuli yatra.

Indian AI, gaming startups shine at AI Impact Summit 2026

NEW DELHI

The AI Impact Summit 2026 began on Monday, putting Indian AI and gaming startups in the spotlight. The event, a global platform for Artificial Intelligence, brought together policymakers, investors, tech leaders, and startups to present real-world AI applications across multiple sectors.

Five Indian ventures—Yesgnome, Metasports (Hitwicket), Koyozo, Youth Buzz (Ourcadium), and Evivve—demonstrated AI-driven innovations reshaping gaming, creative production, and enterprise solutions. Yesgnome introduced Sketly AI, a platform for rapid creation of production-ready game assets, allowing studios to maintain visual consistency while reducing timelines. Metasports showcased Hitwicket, its multiplayer cricket game with 18 million users, featuring a generative AI-powered real-time commentary engine that personalises narration and voice output.

Koyozo displayed its mobile gaming ecosystem, including Koyozo One hardware with hall-effect joysticks and haptic feedback, paired with Koyozo Club for smart controls and remote play integration. Youth Buzz presented "Man vs. GPT" on its Ourcadium platform, where human players compete against adaptive AI, offering audiences an interactive view of AI learning and strategy.

Indian AI and gaming startups showcased innovative technologies, highlighting the country's growing strength in AI-powered entertainment

The summit highlighted India's rising influence in AI-native gaming and immersive technologies. Startups demonstrated how AI can streamline production, enhance gameplay, and create original entertainment experiences. With innovation at the core, the event positioned India as a hub for homegrown AI solutions in gaming, creative industries, and interactive media, attracting global attention from investors and technology leaders.

DPIIT Joint Secretary Says AI Will Transform Future Jobs

Shri Sanjiv, Joint Secretary at the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), said on Monday that artificial intelligence (AI) will bring a transformative era for India. Speaking at the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi, he reassured people that fears of AI causing job losses are unfounded, comparing them to concerns when computers were first introduced in the late 1990s and early 2000s. "Hosting this summit for the first time is a major moment for India," Sanjiv said. "AI, like computers, will create new opportunities and bring a revolution in the days ahead."

NHRC orders report on DU journalist assault case

NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday issued notices to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), North Delhi, and the Vice Chancellor of Delhi University regarding the alleged assault of a female journalist and content creator during a UGC protest at Delhi University's North Campus on February 13.

The complainant alleged that a mob attacked her physically and verbally, targeting her based on caste, and threatened her with further violence. The incident has been described as caste-based violence, an infringement on press freedom, and a serious violation of her fundamental rights to life, dignity, and personal security. She sought an impartial investigation, action against the accused, security measures, legal aid, and compensation.

The NHRC, presided over by Member Priyank Kanoongo, said the allegations prima facie indicate a violation of human rights. The Commission has directed the DCP and Vice Chancellor to inquire into the matter and submit an Action Taken Report within two weeks.

Taking to X, Priyank Kanoongo stated, "A complaint has been received of violent misconduct towards a female journalist at Delhi University. The miscreants will be dealt with as per the law. We will not tolerate the insult to women under any circumstances."

The NHRC's intervention underscores its commitment to protecting the rights of journalists and ensuring accountability for violence and harassment on university campuses.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ಉಡುಪಿ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಚೇರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಮೌಲಾನಾ ಅಜಾದ್ ಭವನ, ಶಿವಳ್ಳಿ, ಅಲೆವೂರು ರಸ್ತೆ, ಮಣಿಪಾಲ- 576104 ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ
ದೂ: 0820-2573596, E-mail: domudupi@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಅಸಂಇಉ/ಹೊ.ಗು./ಸಿಆರ್-59/2025-26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11-02-2026
ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ: (ದ್ವಿ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿ)
ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಕಛೇರಿಗಳು, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿ ನಿಲಯಗಳು, ವಸತಿ ಶಾಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೃಂದದ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲದ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.
(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ: ರೂ.79.28 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (2) ಇಂ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ಮೊತ್ತ: ರೂ.1.58 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (3) e-portal ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಲಕೋಟೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ಸಮಯ: ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10-03-2026 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ. (4) e-portal ನ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು & ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ: ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14-03-2026 ಪೂರ್ವಾಹ್ನ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ (ಸ್ಥಳ & ದಿನಾಂಕ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತದೆ) (5) e-portalನ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಲಕೋಟೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ: ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆ ನಂತರದಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. (6) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಳಾಸ: Website: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ, ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: (0824) – 2211078
ಸಹಿ/-ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ವಾಸಸಂ/ಗನಿಉ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/723/25-26 ದಿ: 16.02.2026 ಅಲ್ಪಸಂಖ್ಯಾತರ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಉಡುಪಿ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ನಂ.1 ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಎಸ್.ಜೆ.ಪಿ. ಆವರಣ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 080-22255210
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕಾಅ/ಕಮಿ.1/ಶಾ.ಭ-ಸಕಾನಿಅ-2&ಸಕಾನಿಅ-4/2025-26/79 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.02.2026
ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನ (ಐಎಫ್‌ಟಿ)
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ನಂ.1, ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಹ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಿರುವರು. (**https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**). ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.02.2026, 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ.** ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನ ಮಾರ್ಗಸೂಚಿಗಳ ಅನ್ವಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.
ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರಗಳು ಇಂತಿವೆ: ಶಾಸಕರ ಭವನ-2 , 3 ನೇ ಹಂತ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಠಡಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 157-158 ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಪೈಂಟಿಂಗ್ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಪಾಲಿಷಿಂಗ್ ಮಾಡುವುದು, ನೆಲಹಾಸು ಹಾಕುವುದು, ಕಿಟಕಿಗೆ ಮೆಶ್ ಹಾಕುವುದು, ಶೌಚಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಫಿಟ್ಟಿಂಗ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸುವುದು, ಸ್ನಾನಗೃಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಟೈಲ್ಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಕುವುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿತ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ವಿವಿದೆಡೆ ಒಟ್ಟು 66 ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು. ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ: **ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 1.98 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು. ಗರಿಷ್ಠ :ರೂ. 24.19 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು** ಇಎಂಡಿ: **ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 5,000/- ಮತ್ತು ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 50,000/-**. ಇತರೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು.
ವಾಸಸಂ/ಉನಿ-ಪಿ.ಪಿ/5665/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025-26 **ಸಹಿ/-ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು.**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi
Phone No. : 08338/ 273859 E-Mail: eepwdckd@gmail.com
No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/7193 DATE: 13/02/2026
Time Extension Short term and e-Tender Notification-1
This Office E-tender notification No. PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/6910 Dated 09/02/2026 was called & Now the First time extension is made for the works at Sl No. 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 30, 51, 53 & 66 is as below.
Calendar of events for the works at Sl No. 3, 4, 6 & 8:
1)Last date for queries & clarifications : 21-02-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 23-02-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 25-02-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.
Calendar of events for the work at Sl No. 1, 2, 5, 7 & 9:
1)Last date for queries & clarifications:25-02-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 2)Last Date of Receipt of Bids :27-02-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 3)Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 02-03-2026 at 4.30 PM, 4)Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 5)If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.
All other conditions of the tender remain unchanged.
Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1854/KSMCA/2025-26 **PWD Division Chikodi.**

ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Wakdewadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)
Possession Notice [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable Property)
Whereas, The undersigned heing the **Authorized Officer of Altum Credo Home Finance Private Limited** hereinafter referred as "ACHFL" under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (no. 3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand notice dated **19.10.2024** with respect to **Loan Agreement No.1192020100055** calling upon the **Ashoka N. J** ("Borrower"), **KH Sharada** ("Co-Borrower") **Nirmalamma Jayadevappa** ("Co-Borrower"), to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being **Rs. 4,57,097/- (Rs. Four Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand and Ninety Seven Rupees Only)** as on **30-SEP-2024** within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice.
1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the **10th day of February of the year 2026**.
2. The borrower/secured debtor and the public, in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with property will be subject to the charge of the ACHFL for an amount of **Rs. 4,57,097/- (Rs. Four Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand and Ninety Seven Rupees Only)** as on **30-SEP-2024** and further interest from **30.09.2024**.
3. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All that Piece and parcel of Property No 58, E Swathu No .151200201900400096, measuring 6.88848 X 15.24 Mts Le. 104.98 Sq imts, situated at Naraganahalli Village, Naraganahalli Gram Panchayath, Davangere and **Bounded on East by:** Road, **West by:** House of Hanumanthappa, **North by:** Road. **South by:** Conservancy Road.
Place : Davangere, Karnataka Sd/-
Date : 10.02.2026 Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Wakdewadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)
Possession Notice [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable Property)
Whereas, The undersigned being the **Authorized Officer** of **Altum Credo Home Finance Private Limited** hereinafter referred as **"ACHFL"** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (no. 3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand notice dated **09.07.2025** with respect to Loan Agreement No. **1192040100079** calling upon the **Nandankumar G M** ("Borrower"), **Chethan GM** ("Co-Borrower") **Manjula G** ("Co-Borrower"), to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being **Rs. 8,06,274/-** (Rupees Eight Lakhs Six Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Four Only), As on **08.07.2025** within 60 days from the receipt of the seld notice.
1. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of said rules on the **11th day of February of the year 2026**.
2. The borrower/secured debtor and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with property will be subject to the charge of the ACHFL for an amount of **Rs. 8,06,274/-** (Rupees Eight Lakhs Six Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Four Only), As on **08.07.2025** and further interest from **08.07.2025**.
3. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of Property No. 39/P, E Swathu No. 151200302200420081, measuring 15.8496 & 12.8016 Mtrs. Situated at Hanagavadi Village, Hanagavadi Gram Panchayath, Harihar, and **Bounded on: On and Towards East:** Road, **On and Towards West:** Property of Sanna Hanumanthappa, **On and Towartis South:** Property of S. Mallikarjunappa, **On and Towards North:** Property of D. Rudrappa.
Place : Harihar, Karnataka Sd/-
Date : 11.02.2026 Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

QUICK READ

FTAs with EU-US boost India's exports

New Delhi

India's exports grew 6.15% during April-January 2025-26, reaching $720.76 billion, up from $679.02 billion last year, says the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO). Merchandise exports rose 2.2% to $366.63 billion. January 2026 exports alone jumped to $80.45 billion from $71.09 billion in January 2025. FIEO President S.C. Ralhan said Free Trade Agreements with the EU and US will boost market access, improve tariffs, and give exporters more predictability, strengthening India's global trade position.

Delhi HC favors Saregama over Ilaiyaraaja rights

New Delhi

The Delhi High Court granted an ex-parte interim order in favour of Saregama India Limited in a copyright case against composer Ilaiyaraaja. The order stops him from using certain film soundtracks and musical works claimed by the company. Justice Tushar Rao Gedela heard the case, noting that Saregama, earlier "The Gramophone Company of India Limited," had agreements from 1976 to 2001 giving it copyright ownership. Ilaiyaraaja is barred from granting licences or claiming ownership of these works.

Maha Cong chief challenges BJP over Shivaji-Tipu remarks

BJP legislator Narayan Kuche had announced a Rs 2 lakh reward for anyone who would cut Sapkal's tongue

MUMBAI

Maharashtra Congress President Harshwardhan Sapkal on Monday issued a bold challenge to the BJP after comparing Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj with 18th-century Mysuru ruler Tipu Sultan in terms of bravery.

BJP legislator Narayan Kuche had announced a Rs 2 lakh reward for anyone who would cut Sapkal's tongue. Responding, Sapkal said if the BJP proves any historical inaccuracy in his remarks, they were free to cut his tongue.

Sapkal added on X that if his tongue's cutting could protect farmers from unfair imports, ensure debt-free farming, stop communal hatred, or reclaim territory from China, then "by all means" it could be done. He accused the BJP of seeking his punishment to hide its constitutional changes and political misdeeds.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis condemned the comparison as "disrespectful" and "unacceptable," stating Shivaji Maharaj is a revered figure in Maharashtra and India, known for justice and the Maratha Empire. He called Tipu Sultan's legacy controversial, alleging the comparison insulted Maharashtra's people and demanded an apology from Sapkal.

Protests erupted outside Congress Bhavan, where BJP and Congress supporters clashed, leaving nine injured, including two journalists and two police personnel. Sapkal accused the BJP of "selective outrage" and challenged it to also burn effigies of past leaders like Bhagat Singh Koshyari and V. D. Savarkar for controversial remarks about Shivaji.

Pune Police registered cross-FIRs: one against Sapkal for "hurting religious sentiments" and others against BJP leaders over the violence. Sapkal reiterated he had clarified his statement and accused the BJP of spreading venom to create trouble, insisting they need no lessons about Shivaji Maharaj from the party.

'Gov skipping assembly address not unusual'

SHIMLA

HP CM Sukhu says Governor Shukla skipping full Assembly address is not unprecedented and stresses that the Revenue Deficit Grant is the state's right, not charity

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Monday said Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla's decision to skip reading the full customary Assembly address "is not an exception." Speaking after the opening day of the Budget Session, Sukhu explained that past governors had also skipped portions of the address.

He clarified that the matter concerns safeguarding Himachal Pradesh's financial entitlements, not seeking aid. "RDG is our right. We are not asking for any charity. Don't harm the rights of the state," Sukhu said. He emphasized that being a hill state, Himachal cannot be compared to larger states in terms of revenue generation, as geographical constraints and limited natural resources reduce its financial capacity.

Sukhu noted that the discontinuation of the Revenue Deficit Grant followed the 16th Finance Commission's recommendations. The state government had called the three-day Assembly session primarily to deliberate on this issue. He urged opposition parties, including the BJP, to rise above party lines and join efforts to seek restoration of the state's rights from the Centre.

Governor Shukla, during the session, read only a few lines of the customary address and placed the speech on the House table, objecting to references concerning constitutional institutions.

The Revenue Deficit Grant and Himachal Pradesh's financial position are expected to dominate discussions throughout the ongoing Budget Session, with CM Sukhu highlighting that protecting the state's entitlements is crucial for its development and fiscal stability.

ED attaches properties in NDPS money case

MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached seven properties, including Mumbai flats, worth about Rs 5.88 crore in an NDPS-linked money laundering case. The properties belong to Faisal Shaikh, Alfiya Shaikh, and others. The probe, based on an NCB complaint, revealed Faisal Shaikh sourced the drug Mephedrone from kingpin Salim Dola. Faisal and Alfiya reportedly ran a network supplying the drug to Samiya Khan, Nasir Yasin Khan, Azim Abu Salim Khan, and others, who then sold it to retail buyers.

Delhi Assembly Privileges Committee sets March 6 as final date for Kejriwal to respond on 'Faansi Ghar'

Delhi Assembly Panel gives Kejriwal a final chance

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly's Committee of Privileges on Monday granted a "final chance" to former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other Aam Aadmi Party leaders to appear in person and give statements regarding the 'Faansi Ghar' issue on March 6. The panel made this decision after Kejriwal requested a hearing in the first week of March.

Other AAP leaders, including former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, former Speaker Ram Niwas Goel, and former Deputy Speaker Rakhi Birla, also submitted written replies seeking a short extension to record their statements. The Committee considered these requests and scheduled the final date to ensure the inquiry proceeds without further delays.

The matter was originally raised by Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta and concerns the authenticity of the 'Faansi Ghar' inaugurated on August 9, 2022, within the Assembly premises. The Privileges Committee was directed to investigate to assess the facts and procedures surrounding the inauguration.

Committee Chairperson Pradyumn Singh Rajput, along with members Surya Prakash Khatri, Abhay Kumar Verma, Ajay Kumar Mahawar, Satish Upadhyay, Neeraj Basoya, Ravi Kant, Ram Singh Netaji, and Surender Kumar, reaffirmed their commitment to transparency, accountability, and institutional integrity.

The panel emphasised that full cooperation from Kejriwal and other concerned individuals is vital for completing a fair and comprehensive inquiry. The final hearing on March 6 will provide the opportunity for all leaders involved to clarify their positions before the Committee submits its findings.

Kejriwal to appear before Delhi Assembly Panel

Former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has agreed to appear before the Delhi Assembly's Privileges Committee regarding the authenticity of the "Faansi Ghar" in the first week of March. Kejriwal cited his busy schedule for missing Monday's hearing and requested the Committee to schedule it between March 2 and 6, 2026. He challenged the panel's jurisdiction, saying the matter relates to the dissolved 7th Vidhan Sabha and is not essential for the Assembly's functioning. A hearing on his plea challenging the Committee's authority is scheduled in the High Court on February 21.

Kolagani Srinivas elected mayor of Karimnagar CMC

KARIMNAGAR

BJP's Kolagani Srinivas was on Monday elected as the Mayor of Karimnagar Municipal Corporation. Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar and other party leaders congratulated him at the Municipal office following his victory.

The elections were held on February 11 across seven Municipal Corporations and 116 municipalities in Telangana, covering a total of 414 wards in the corporations of Kothagudem, Karimnagar, Mahabubnagar, Mancherial, Nizamabad, Nalgonda, and Ramagundam, along with 2,582 wards in the 116 municipalities.

While the BJP celebrated Srinivas' win in Karimnagar, the Congress party also claimed victory in several areas. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, thanked the people of Telangana for supporting Congress, calling the mandate a reflection of "people-first policies rooted in social justice, dignity, and inclusive growth." In an X post, he praised party leaders and workers for their efforts, saying the success strengthens the vision of a "Prajala Telangana" where progress reaches every family.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge also expressed satisfaction over the results, thanking grassroots workers and asserting that the mandate reflects the trust of the people.

Akali Dal alleges AAP used govt funds for rally

CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Monday accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of using government funds to hold a rally in Moga, urging Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria and the Election Commission of India (ECI) to act. SAD leader Daljit Singh Cheema alleged that AAP linked the event with the government's 'Yudh Nashain Virudh' scheme, but it was effectively an election rally for the 2027 Assembly polls.

Cheema said government money was spent to transport attendees and cover the rally's entire cost, even though AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi leaders, who have no role in Punjab governance, presided over it. He described the event as politically motivated, with speeches targeting opponents and making unverified allegations.

The SAD urged the Governor and ECI to recover the expenses, stating the rally violated norms and should not be considered a government function. Cheema also criticised the involvement of the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, warning it could politicise the bureaucracy. He said forcing officers to attend political rallies threatens democracy and undermines free and fair elections.

The controversy highlights concerns over the misuse of public resources in election campaigning and the potential impact on administrative neutrality ahead of Punjab's upcoming Assembly elections.

TN BJP chief regrets comment on Trisha

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu BJP chief Nainar Nagendran on Monday expressed regret after his comment about actor Trisha Krishnan drew widespread criticism from political leaders. Speaking in Tirunelveli, he said the remark was unintentional and slipped out while responding to TVK leader Vijay's speech in Salem on February 13. Nagendran added that BJP national women's wing president Vanathi Srinivasan had discussed the matter with him and reiterated, "If my words caused discomfort, I sincerely regret it."

The remark triggered backlash from DMK MPs Thamizhachi Thangapandian, Kanimozhi, and Congress MP Sudha Ramakrishnan, who called it unacceptable and disrespectful, stressing that personal attacks on women undermine democratic discourse.

Actor Trisha also condemned the comment through her lawyer, calling it "derogatory and inappropriate." She clarified she has no political affiliations and prefers to remain neutral. "Disrespectful behaviour must always be condemned," she said, urging that her name not be dragged into political matters.

Trisha emphasised she wants recognition solely for her professional work and noted that public officials should exercise responsibility and restraint while speaking.

HP Guv skips key Finance Commission address

SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Monday surprised legislators by completing his 50-page customary Budget Session address in just a few minutes, skipping portions related to the 16th Finance Commission. He read only the opening lines covering supplementary demands for 2025–26, the Budget for 2026–27, and other legislative business.

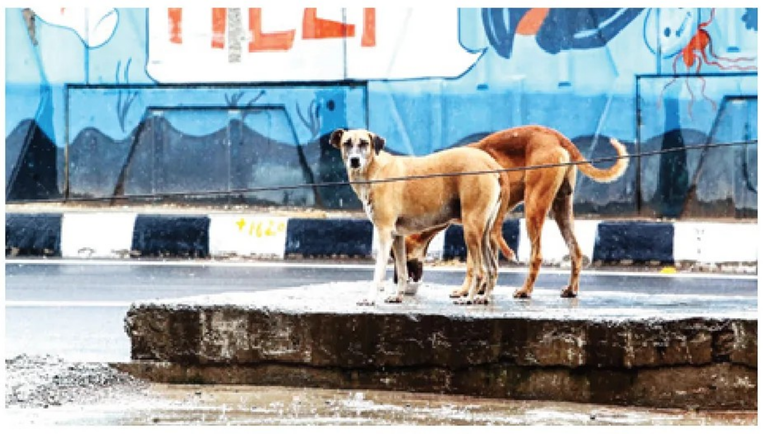
Observers noted the move avoided discussion on the discontinuation of the Revenue Deficit Grant (RDG), a critical issue for hill and small states like Himachal Pradesh. Historically, Himachal has consistently received RDG since the first Finance Commission in 1952, which helps fund development projects, welfare schemes, and disaster management. Paragraphs 15 and 16 of the speech, skipped by the Governor, highlighted the adverse impact of RDG discontinuation on Special Category States.

Political analysts said the Governor's brief address sets an "aggressive tone" toward the Opposition BJP, which has criticised the Congress government over alleged fiscal mismanagement and stalled Central-funded projects, including a medical device park.

STRAY RULE

Rajasthan HRC acts after dog bites tourist

JAIPUR



The Rajasthan State Human Rights Commission (RSHRC) on Monday took notice of a stray dog biting an Israeli tourist at Jaipur International Airport's Terminal 2. The victim, arriving from Delhi, was attacked near the arrival gate and left bleeding.

Airport staff provided first aid and rushed her to a private hospital. Reports revealed the same dog had bitten three other people the previous week, yet no action was taken to remove it.

The Commission issued notices to Jaipur Municipal Corporation, Jaipur Police, Deputy Commissioner Sanganer, and Jaipur Airport authorities. It specifically directed the airport manager to reimburse all medical expenses and provide appropriate compensation to the victim. Chairperson Justice GR Moolchandani said such incidents harm Jaipur's image as an international tourist destination and contradict the spirit of "Padharo Mhare Desh."

The RSHRC highlighted that stray dog attacks are frequently reported across Rajasthan and emphasized the need for strict adherence to Supreme Court and Rajasthan High Court guidelines on handling dangerous dogs. The Commission said airport authorities, CISF, municipal officials, and district administration are jointly responsible for rescuing aggressive dogs and relocating them to veterinary hospitals or safe shelters.

The case will be reviewed on March 5, 2026, to check compliance with the orders. The Commission stressed that allowing tourists to be attacked by known stray dogs is unacceptable and urged authorities to ensure stricter safety measures at Jaipur Airport to protect visitors and maintain the city's reputation as a global tourism hub.

SER INDUSTRIES LIMITED

CIN: L60231KA1963PLC004604

SER INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Office: Chikkakuntanahalli Village Bidadi Hobli Ramnagaram Taluk, Bengaluru – 562109 **Corporate Office:** Plot No 79, 501, 5th Floor Lalwani House, Sakore Nagar Viman Nagar, Pune, Maharashtra, India, 411014. **Mobile:** +91-7249049195 **Email:** info.serindustries@gmail.com **Website:** ser-industries.co.in

EXTRACT OF FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE 3RD QUARTER ENDED 31.12.2025 (Figures in Lakhs)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year to date Figures ended		Year Ended
		31.12.2025	30.09.2025	31.12.2024	31.12.2025	31.12.2024	31.03.2025
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	10.30	3.00	14.58	44.30	14.58	46.73
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional items and extraordinary items)	27.17	(0.22)	10.90	45.04	(7.18)	(36.71)
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items and extraordinary items)	27.17	(0.22)	10.90	45.04	(7.18)	(36.71)
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items and extraordinary items)	21.61	(0.22)	10.90	39.48	(7.18)	(38.82)
5	Total Comprehensive Income/ (Loss)	21.61	(0.22)	10.90	39.48	(7.18)	(38.81)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	99.46	99.46	99.46	99.46	99.46	99.46
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year)	-	(17.79)	-	-	-	(95.02)
8	Earnings Per Share (EPS)						
	(a) Basic	2.17	(0.02)	1.10	3.97	(0.72)	(3.92)
	(b) Diluted	2.17	(0.02)	1.10	3.97	(0.72)	(3.92)

1) The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of directors at their respective meetings held on February 14, 2026. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have conducted a Limited Review of the results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2025.
2) The above Unaudited financial results have been prepared in accordance with the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 (IndAS) notified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013, as amended from time to time.
3) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the BSE under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2025 are available on the website of BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website at https://www.ser-industries.co.in/investors-disclosures. The same could also be accessed by scanning the QR Code provided herein.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors
For **SER Industries Limited**
Sd/-
Sunil Kumar Shahi
Director
DIN: 01887403

Place: Bangalore
Date: 14.02.2026

'India's energy decisions based on cost not pressure'

India clarified that its energy purchase decisions will be guided by costs, risks, and availability, not political pressure

NEW DELHI

At the Munich Security Conference on Saturday, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar emphasized India's commitment to strategic autonomy amid recent US sanctions on Russian oil.

His remarks came after US leaders, including President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, claimed that India had agreed to halt additional imports of Russian crude following new US sanctions on Moscow's energy sector.

Jaishankar strongly refuted these claims, stating that India remains independent in its

foreign and energy policy decisions. "We are very much wedded to strategic autonomy because it is very much a part of our history and our evolution," he said during a panel discussion with German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul. He added that strategic autonomy is a core principle supported across India's political spectrum.

Highlighting the complexity of the global oil market, Jaishankar explained that Indian oil companies, like those in Europe, make decisions based on practical considerations. "They look at availability, look at costs, look at risks and take decisions that they feel are in their best interest," he said. When asked directly about stopping Russian oil purchases, he reiterated India's independent approach: "Would I make choices which may not agree with your thinking — yes, it can happen."

India has not officially confirmed or denied the US claims regarding Russian oil. This energy debate coincides with a recalibration in India-US trade ties. Following a recent phone call between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump, both nations announced a reduction in US tariffs on Indian goods from 50 per cent to 18 per cent, including removal of a 25 per cent tariff imposed last year over India's Russian oil imports.

India's firm stance signals that its energy and trade decisions will continue to prioritize national interest over external pressures.

QUICK READ

EaseMyTrip shares soar after big capital raise

New Delhi

Shares of Easy Trip Planners Ltd, which runs the popular travel platform EaseMyTrip, jumped 20% on Monday. The sharp rise follows the company's announcement to raise up to Rs 500 crore to support growth. The board approved issuing new shares or other securities, subject to approvals. The funds will help expand hotel and holiday services, improve technology, and explore strategic opportunities. Over the past month, EaseMyTrip shares have risen about 13%, reflecting strong investor confidence.

Asian markets rise on US rate-cut hopes

Tokyo

Asian markets opened slightly higher on Monday as easing selling pressure and softer US inflation data fueled hopes of a Federal Reserve rate cut later this year. Japanese shares rose after reports showed the economy grew in the fourth quarter of 2025, recovering from the previous slump. The yen stayed mostly steady against the dollar. Australian stocks also climbed, while China's markets remain closed for Lunar New Year. US markets were shut for Presidents' Day.

NPCI expands UPI wallet for global delegates

NEW DELHI

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on Monday said it has extended its 'UPI One World' wallet service for foreign delegates attending the India AI Impact Summit 2026. The move aims to make digital payments easier for international visitors during the event. NPCI's step highlights India's growing focus on seamless cross-border payment solutions and showcases the country's digital payment infrastructure to global participants at the summit.

Pakistan has increased petrol by PKR 5 and high-speed diesel by PKR 7.32, citing global market movements and regulatory recommendations

Pak economy in shambles: Fuel prices soar amidst public outrage

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government on Sunday announced a hike in fuel prices, raising petrol by PKR 5 per litre to PKR 258.17 and high-speed diesel (HSD) by PKR 7.32 to PKR 275.70 per litre for February.

The petroleum division attributed the increase to international market trends and suggestions from the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra).

HSD is widely used in heavy transport vehicles, agricultural machinery, and trains, meaning the price rise could lead to higher costs for vegetables, grains, and other essential items. Petrol, mainly used in private vehicles, rickshaws, and two-wheelers, directly affects the daily budgets of middle- and lower-middle-class families. Residents expressed concern over the growing burden of fuel costs amid ongoing inflation.

Earlier this year, flour prices also surged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly in Shangla and surrounding districts. A 20-kilogram bag now costs around PKR 2,850, while a 40-kilogram pack sells for up to PKR 5,700 and a 50-kilogram bag for roughly PKR 7,000. Citizens blamed weak government oversight, hoarding, and profiteering for making basic food items unaffordable.

The combination of rising fuel and food costs is intensifying financial strain for low- and middle-income households. Economists warn that continued increases in transport and agricultural costs could push overall inflation higher in the coming months.

Residents are urging both the provincial and federal governments to implement strict price controls on essential commodities and ensure transparency in fuel distribution to protect vulnerable families.

Without timely action, the rising cost of living could further strain household budgets across Pakistan.

Pausing rally, gold, silver ETFs fall as precious metals decline

NEW DELHI

Gold and silver prices fell on Monday as the US dollar strengthened following US inflation data. MCX April gold futures dipped 0.56 per cent to Rs 1,55,023 per 10 grams, while MCX March silver futures dropped 1.99 per cent to Rs 2,39,501 per kg around 12:30 am.

The dollar index rose 0.10 per cent to 97 after January's US CPI showed a 0.2 per cent increase, down from December's 0.3 per cent. Annual US inflation came in at 2.4 per cent, lower than the previous 2.7 per cent. Analysts said a stronger dollar makes bullion more expensive for buyers holding other currencies.

Gold is expected to find support at Rs 1,54,000 and Rs 1,53,150, with resistance at Rs 1,56,800 and Rs 1,58,200. Silver's support lies at Rs 2,38,800 and Rs 2,32,000, with resistance at Rs 2,49,100 and Rs 2,55,000.

Despite short-term dips, analysts noted the broader trend for precious metals remains positive due to geopolitical tensions, central bank buying, and investors seeking alternatives to bonds and currencies. COMEX silver is trading between $73 and $84 after a sharp correction from record highs above $121, reflecting short-term bearish pressure.

Investors are closely watching upcoming US economic releases, including the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes, GDP estimates, and PCE inflation data, for guidance on the Fed's interest rate moves.

Market participants are also monitoring crude oil price trends, influenced by US-Iran talks and ongoing Russia-Ukraine negotiations, which could impact global inflation and commodity markets further.

Anthropic opens Bengaluru office, expands India ties

BENGALURU

Anthropic has opened its new office in Bengaluru, marking its second base in the Asia-Pacific region. The move comes as India becomes the second-largest market for its AI assistant, Claude.ai, reflecting strong adoption across enterprise, education, and agriculture sectors.

The Bengaluru office will be led by Managing Director Irina Ghose. She highlighted India's highly skilled developer community and robust digital infrastructure, noting that nearly half of Claude usage in the country involves computer and mathematical tasks such as building applications and modernising systems. Anthropic also reported that its run-rate revenue in India has doubled since October 2025.

Several partnerships accompanied the launch. Air India is using Claude Code to accelerate software development, while Cognizant has deployed the AI tool to 350,000 employees worldwide. In the social impact sector, the company is working with Pratham to pilot an "Anytime Testing Machine" for students in 20 schools.

Anthropic is also focusing on regional language capabilities, curating training data in 10 Indian languages including Hindi, Bengali, and Tamil. Collaborations with Karya and the Collective Intelligence Project are testing model performance on local tasks in agriculture and law.

The company is leveraging the Model Context Protocol (MCP) in India, with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation recently launching the first official government MCP server. Swiggy is also using the open-source protocol to allow users to order groceries directly through Claude.

Irina Ghose said India represents "one of the world's most promising opportunities to bring the benefits of responsible AI to vastly more people and enterprises." She added that the country's technical talent and digital ecosystem provide a strong foundation to ensure AI technology reaches those who can benefit most.

Pentagon threatens to end Anthropic AI ties over dispute

NEW DELHI

US based artificial intelligence firm Anthropic is facing a serious challenge as the Pentagon considers ending its partnership with the company over how its AI models can be used by the US military.

Reports say Pentagon officials are unhappy that Anthropic insists on keeping some limits on the use of its AI, especially for military purposes. The defence department, also called the Department of War in some reports, wants AI tools that can be used for "all lawful purposes," including weapons development and battlefield tasks. Anthropic has resisted loosening its safety rules, leading to growing tension with US defence leaders.

One point of controversy is the reported use of Anthropic's AI model Claude during a US military operation that captured former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. Claude was deployed through a partnership with AI software firm Palantir Technologies. Although neither Anthropic nor US officials have publicly confirmed the details, multiple media reports link the AI's use to that mission.

Anthropic emphasises its commitment to safe and ethical AI. The company has said it continues to support US national security work, but wants to ensure its technology is not used for autonomous weapons or mass domestic surveillance.

Analysts say it would be difficult for the Pentagon to replace Claude quickly because competing models are still being developed.

'AI will not kill jobs but will unbundle them'

NEW DELHI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is advancing at a record pace, and the sector is expected to see massive growth in the coming three years, Puneet Chandok, President of Microsoft India and South Asia, said on Monday.

Speaking at the "AI for Disaster Management" session during the AI Impact Summit 2026, Chandok highlighted the speed of AI development over recent months, calling the progress "incredible."

AI models are evolving fast, and the sector could grow exponentially over the next three years, says Microsoft India President Puneet Chandok

Chandok noted that coding is one of the most important applications of AI today. What began as simple coding assistance has now grown into integrated business operations. "AI-powered digital colleagues are increasingly becoming teammates within organisations," he said. AI is also drafting legal documents, raising questions about how companies manage control and sovereignty over these systems.

He stressed that businesses are moving from cloud-first to AI-first strategies. "The next generation of companies will be built primarily on AI foundations rather than just cloud infrastructure," Chandok explained.

Responding to concerns about job losses, he said AI will not destroy jobs but will reshape them. "AI will not kill jobs, but it will unbundle jobs," he said, urging individuals to continuously upgrade their skills. "If you are not learning AI today, you are not learning anything," he added.

Chandok predicted that AI growth over the next three years could scale up a thousand times, reflecting the technology's rapid evolution and adoption. He emphasized that the world is ready to embrace AI and that organisations must adapt quickly to leverage its potential fully.

With AI becoming more powerful and pervasive, businesses and individuals alike must prepare for a future deeply shaped by artificial intelligence.

'India must use AI urgently for inclusive growth'

MUMBAI

As the India AI Impact Summit 2026 began in New Delhi on Monday, senior policymakers emphasized the need to use artificial intelligence (AI) to drive inclusive growth across the country.

Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran warned that delaying AI adoption each year limits economic and technological opportunities. "India needs to act now to use the benefits of AI to promote inclusive growth," he said, adding that the country could become the first large society where human potential and machine intelligence reinforce each other.

Nageswaran called for a "Team India" approach, involving government, private sector, academia, and policymakers, and stressed strengthening foundational education and scaling high-quality skills. He noted that AI progress "will not happen by drift" and requires urgency, political will, and strong state capacity. He also recommended reforms in education and skills, expansion of labour-intensive services, and removal of regulatory bottlenecks, warning that lack of action could trigger social and economic instability.

S. Krishnan, Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, highlighted the importance of keeping AI human-centric and democratically accessible. "There needs to be democratic access to AI resources, and it must be done in a way that people are at the centre of this process," he said, describing AI as a key driver of growth for India and the Global South.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed global participants, calling it a matter of great pride that people from around the world are attending the summit.

The AI Expo, running from February 16 to 20 alongside the summit, will cover more than 70,000 square metres across 10 arenas. It will host technology firms, startups, academia, Union Ministries, state governments, and international partners, showcasing AI innovations and their potential to accelerate economic and social development in India.

CRISIS WORSENS

Flour crisis deepens in Baloch as prices surge

BALOCHISTAN

Flour prices in Quetta are rising sharply, adding to the struggles of households already hit hard by record inflation. A 50-kilogram bag now sells for around Rs 6,600 to Rs 6,800, while a 20-kilogram pack costs Rs 2,650 to Rs 2,750, figures that were unimaginable only months ago.

Residents from low- and middle-income neighborhoods say they must carefully calculate daily expenses, often reducing consumption, borrowing, or relying on relatives. Many report that wages remain stagnant while food costs continue to climb, forcing families into financial stress. Community elders blame weak enforcement for unchecked price hikes by retailers.

The situation is particularly worrying as Ramazan approaches, a month when food consumption traditionally rises. Vulnerable families fear they may not be able to store even the minimum flour needed for sehri and iftar. Citizens are urging authorities to act immediately, calling for subsidies, stricter inspections, and penalties for profiteering. They warn that failure to intervene will damage public trust in official relief promises and worsen hardship.

The Quetta crisis reflects broader challenges across Balochistan, where transportation issues and supply disruptions keep prices higher than in other provinces. Families say patience is running out, and what they need most is practical help rather than assurances.

Traders continue to raise rates with little accountability, and authorities have yet to offer visible relief. Residents hope urgent steps will be taken to make flour affordable before Ramazan, as soaring prices threaten not only daily meals but also the ability to observe traditional fasting rituals. Without swift intervention, hardships in Quetta are expected to deepen further in the weeks ahead.

Karnataka's Energy Evolution: Last 1,000 days under Energy Minister KJ George

Over the past roughly 1,000 days, the Karnataka Energy Department has navigated a transformational journey — steering the state's energy landscape from periods of challenge to notable achievements in power security, renewable expansion, infrastructure strengthening, and consumer welfare. At the heart of these efforts has been Energy Minister K. J. George, whose leadership has aimed at strengthening reliability, promoting sustainability, and supporting agrarian and household power needs.

While challenges remain – especially in storage infrastructure and scaling emerging technologies – the consolidated efforts over the last ~1000 days have laid a firm foundation for Karnataka's energy future. Overall, through targeted reforms, infrastructural investments, renewable energy scaling, and welfare-oriented schemes, the Karnataka Energy Department under Minister K. J. George has delivered significant progress. The focus on stability, sustainability, and inclusivity is reshaping the state's energy narrative – moving it closer to energy security, green transformation, and widespread societal benefit.

National recognition and 'Energy Efficiency' awards

The state's efforts have not gone unnoticed at the national level. Karnataka earned the National Energy Conservation Award for its accomplishments in energy efficiency and conservation, reflecting its strong performance in the State Energy Efficiency Index over multiple years. This award underscores the government's commitment to sustainable practices and benchmark performance in efficiency across sectors. Minister George, while acknowledging these accolades, emphasized that energy conservation efforts are integral to combating climate change and improving long-term sustainability.

- Future Outlook and Strategic Priorities
- Looking ahead, Karnataka's energy trajectory appears focused on several strategic priorities
- Augmenting renewable capacities (solar, wind, hybrid systems.
- Building energy storage solutions such as pumped hydro and battery installations to address intermittency.
- Enhancing grid robustness to support energy export opportunities.
- Continuing consumer-friendly policies that balance affordability with environmental responsibility.

Power security and uninterrupted supply

One of the most significant accomplishments during this period has been Karnataka's consistent power availability with no reports of unscheduled power cuts. In recent remarks, Minister George highlighted that Karnataka now enjoys a surplus power position, where interruptions occur only for planned maintenance, and not due to shortages. This marks a shift from earlier volatility in energy supply, ensuring residents and businesses operate without unexpected disruptions.

The increased demand for electricity in the state — rising from approximately 8,000 MW to nearly 14,000 MW — has been met with strategic planning and proactive grid management. By balancing generation, distribution, and demand-side measures, the Energy Department has prioritized elevation of supply reliability across urban and rural sectors.

Transition from 'deficit to surplus

There was a time not too long ago when Karnataka grappled with power shortfalls. However, over the last few years this narrative has reversed. In 2024, the energy sector saw a sweeping turnaround: from facing supply constraints to generating enough electricity not just for internal consumption but also to sell on power exchanges. In fact, Karnataka reportedly earned over ₹1,400 crore by selling electricity in the market and returned significant power units to states from where it had borrowed during lean periods.

This achievement reflects the Energy Department's strategic emphasis on strengthening generation capacity, effective grid management, and optimizing supply mixes — including hydropower, thermal, and renewable sources. Notably, three major thermal power plants overseen by the state energy corporation (KPCL) have posted record generation figures, showcasing both capacity augmentation and enhanced operational efficiency.

Expansion of renewable energy & clean power goals

Karnataka's strides toward clean and sustainable energy have been remarkable. The state has consistently increased renewable energy generation, pushing green sources closer to the core of its energy mix. On certain days, renewable resources have powered up to 80% of the state's electricity supply, driven by robust wind and solar output along with hydropower contributions.

Under Minister George's tenure, investment in renewables has been a key priority. Initiatives include large-scale solar parks — for instance, proposed projects similar to existing ones like Pavagada Solar Park — and significant targets to expand wind and hybrid capacities in collaboration with central and private entities.

A major milestone was Karnataka leading the nation in wind power capacity additions for the 2024–25 period, with over 1,300 MW installed, earning recognition during Global Wind Day celebrations. The government highlighted plans for expanding up to 17 GW of future wind projects and establishing renewable energy reserve zones to systematically harness wind resources.

These efforts align with the broader vision of India's net-zero and sustainability targets, strengthening Karnataka's position as a leader in renewable energy adoption among Indian states.

Infrastructure growth & distribution enhancements

To support growing demand and improve power delivery, the Energy Department has emphasized infrastructure expansion. Plans were unveiled to erect multiple substations across the state, aimed at reducing distribution losses and boosting grid resilience. These substations also facilitate smoother handling of demand fluctuations in both agricultural and residential segments.

Workforce strengthening has been another critical focus. Minister George announced major recruitment and placement drives for thousands of linemen and engineers to address operational shortages that previously slowed pole shifting, transformer repairs, and new line installations. This cadre boost is likely to accelerate rural electrification and enhance service quality across utility companies.

These moves reflect a holistic approach — integrating physical infrastructure with human resource capacity to ensure that expanded generation and ambitious renewable goals translate into real benefits for end users.

Consumer-centric initiatives: Farmers & households

A defining theme of the last three years has been the government's attention to power affordability and equity. Under the Gruha Jyothi scheme, eligible households receive free electricity for up to 200 units per month, significantly reducing energy costs for millions across the state. This subsidy scheme has seen widespread enrollment and has become a cornerstone of poverty alleviation and economic support.

Karnataka Labour Ministry: Championing Protection for Migrant Labour and Gig Economy Workers

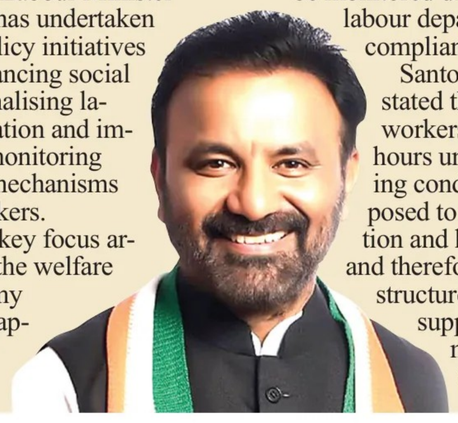
The Karnataka Labour Ministry plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the rights, welfare, and working conditions of millions of workers in the state. With rapid economic growth in sectors such as construction, services, domestic work, and digital platforms, Karnataka has one of India's most diverse labour forces. Among these, migrant labourers and gig workers represent especially vulnerable segments whose informal employment status traditionally left them outside the ambit of social security and formal protections.

Karnataka attracts large numbers of internal migrants due to its industrial expansion and booming urban centres. According to labour department estimates and national registrations, tens of lakhs of workers in Karnataka are identified as unorganised or interstate migrants, although only a fraction are formally registered in welfare databases. Many of these workers come from states such as Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal to take up construction, domestic services and other informal jobs that are essential to the state's economy but often lack statutory protections and benefits.

Recognising these challenges, the Labour Ministry under the leadership of Labour Minister Santosh Lad has undertaken a series of policy initiatives aimed at enhancing social security, formalising labour participation and improving the monitoring and welfare mechanisms for these workers.

One of the key focus areas has been the welfare of gig economy workers—a rapidly growing category of workers engaged through digital platforms for services like ride-sharing, food and grocery delivery, logistics, and other app-based gigs. In August 2025, the Karnataka Legislature passed the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025, a landmark piece of legislation piloted by Santosh Lad that seeks to extend social security and safety protections to gig workers.

The Bill mandates the creation of a Gig Workers Welfare Board and a Gig Workers Welfare Fund, financed by a welfare fee collected from platform aggregators (ranging from 1 % to 5 % of payouts), to ensure benefits like income security, occupational health protections, and dispute resolution mechanisms. It also requires gig workers to be registered and platforms to maintain transparent records of transactions and payments, which can be monitored digitally by the labour department for compliance.



Santosh Lad has stated that many gig workers put in long hours under challenging conditions—exposed to traffic pollution and health risks—and therefore need structured welfare support that moves beyond traditional contract definitions.

Beyond gig workers, the ministry has also been proactive in supporting migrant labourers through measures such as issuing smart cards to register unorganised workers, enhancing access to welfare benefits, and inaugurating temporary housing complexes for construction labourers in industrial zones. These initiatives aim to bridge the gap between formal welfare schemes and the informal nature of much migrant work.

To improve monitoring of migrant labour, state policies increasingly emphasise better registration and data integration, cooperation with national labour databases (like e-Shram), and coordination with district administrations to identify and enrol migrant workers into welfare programmes. This data-driven monitoring is crucial given that many migrant labourers remain undocumented in official records.

Overall, the Karnataka Labour Ministry, guided by Minister Santosh Lad, is expanding the state's labour governance framework to be more inclusive of informal, migrant, and platform-based workers—recognising that a secure and equitable labour ecosystem must adapt to new forms of work while strengthening protection for those who have historically lacked formal rights and recognition.

Transforming Healthcare Sector: Karnataka's Medical Education Dept Marks 1,000 Days of Progress Under Sharan Prakash Patil

Over the past 1,000 days, Karnataka's Medical Education Department has undergone a period of accelerated growth and structural reform, guided by the leadership of Sharan Prakash Patil, Minister for Medical Education and Skill Development. With a clear emphasis on accessibility, infrastructure expansion, and quality enhancement, the department has strengthened Karnataka's position as a leading hub for medical education and public healthcare in India.

One of the department's most visible achievements has been the expansion and upgradation of government medical colleges across the state. Under Minister Patil's stewardship, several district hospitals have been upgraded with modern diagnostic facilities, advanced operation theatres, and improved emergency care units. These upgrades have not only enhanced patient care but also created improved learning environments for undergraduate and postgraduate medical students.

A major thrust area has been increasing medical seats to meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals. By systematically strengthening faculty recruitment, improving teaching infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with national regulatory standards, Karnataka has added new MBBS and postgraduate seats in government institutions. This expansion directly contributes to addressing the doctor–patient ratio and strengthening rural healthcare delivery in the long term.

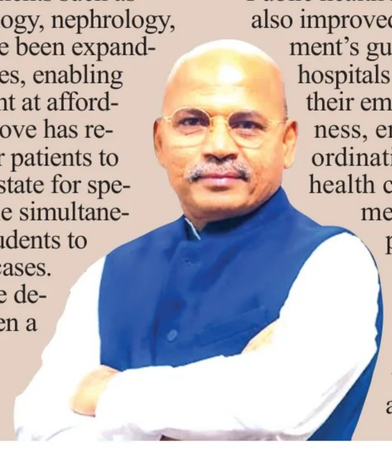
The department has also prioritized the modernization of medical equipment and digital health systems. Teaching hospitals have adopted upgraded laboratory services, imaging facilities, and digital record-keeping systems. These initiatives have allowed students to train in technology-enabled environments while ensuring faster and more efficient patient services. Telemedicine facilities have also been expanded, bridging gaps between tertiary care centers and remote communities.

Another key milestone in the past 1,000 days has been the strengthening of super-specialty services in government medical institutions. Departments such as cardiology, neurology, nephrology, and oncology have been expanded in select colleges, enabling advanced treatment at affordable costs. This move has reduced the need for patients to travel outside the state for specialized care, while simultaneously exposing students to complex clinical cases.

Human resource development has been a consistent focus. The department has taken measures to streamline faculty appointments and ensure transparent recruitment processes. By addressing faculty shortages and encouraging academic research, the government has aimed to create a more robust academic culture within its institutions. Increased emphasis on research publications, skill development programs, and simulation-based training has further strengthened academic standards.

Importantly, infrastructure development has extended beyond classrooms and wards. Student hostels, staff quarters, and campus facilities have been upgraded in many institutions to create supportive learning environments. These improvements reflect a broader understanding that medical education depends not only on academic excellence but also on adequate living and working conditions.

Public health responsiveness has also improved under the department's guidance. Teaching hospitals have enhanced their emergency preparedness, ensuring better coordination during public health challenges. Investments in oxygen plants, critical care beds, and infection control systems have strengthened institutional resilience and readiness.



QUICK READ

Israeli-Arab man charged with spying for Iran

Tel Aviv

An Israeli-Arab man has been charged with spying on former Defence Minister Yoav Galant for Iran. Fares Abu al-Hija, 32, was arrested in January near Galant's home. Prosecutors say he was recruited through Telegram and paid in cryptocurrency by an Iranian agent. He allegedly took photos, delivered secret codes, and hid mobile phones with secure apps. Israel's security agency said such Iranian efforts have increased since the 2025 war between Iran and Israel.

Another Awami League leader dies in police custody

Dhaka

A local leader of the Awami League has died in police custody in Bangladesh. Shamikul Islam, 60, was head of the party in Palashbari. Officials said he became seriously ill at Gaibandha District Jail and died on the way to Rangpur Medical College Hospital on Sunday. Reports said several cases were filed against him after the party lost power on August 5, 2024. He had been arrested more than once and was in jail at the time of his death.

Post-poll violence escalates across Bangladesh

Dhaka

At least nine people were injured, and a house was set ablaze amid rising post-election violence in multiple districts of Bangladesh. The incidents follow the 13th national parliamentary election, which saw a decisive victory for the Bangladesh Nationalist Party.

In Lalpur upazila of Natore district, six people were hurt after clashes between two groups of BNP workers on Saturday night. Police arrested two suspects and recovered a firearm at the scene, according to Md Mojibar Rahman, officer-in-charge of Lalpur Police Station. Elsewhere, 35-year-old Giasuddin Rasel, a BNP election agent in Sherpur district, was injured in an attack allegedly by Jamaat-e-Islami members. In Feni district, a Jamaat supporter, Nurul Absar Belal, was reportedly assaulted by BNP workers at his home and later taken to Feni General Hospital.

Oppn protests grow over Imran Khan's medical care

A senior leader of MWM said protests will continue in Islamabad and Balochistan, warning that history does not forgive oppressive rulers

QUETTA

A senior leader of Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) has strongly criticised the government's handling of peaceful protests demanding treatment for jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Allama Ali Hasnain Husaini said authorities denied food, water and medicines to key opposition figures during a sit-in in Islamabad.

He said Senate Opposition Leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas Jafri and National Assembly Opposition Leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai were not given basic necessities for three days. Husaini called the move undemocratic and inhuman. He warned that the government would be fully responsible if any harm came to the leaders.

Jafri, who has diabetes, needs regular medicine, Husaini said, calling it a basic human right. He added that protests would continue in Islamabad and Balochistan, warning that history does not forgive oppressive rulers.

Lawmakers have staged a sit-in outside Parliament House and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House since Friday. They are demanding proper medical care for Khan, founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Protesters say his right-eye vision has fallen to 15 percent. A medical report submitted to the Supreme Court of Pakistan stated Khan suffered a blood clot that badly damaged his eye. The report was filed by lawyer Salman Safdar after visiting him in Adiala Jail. Khan was recently taken to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences for an eye procedure. His party said neither his family nor senior leaders were informed about the treatment.

Activists raise alarm over Pak judicial actions

A human rights group claims Pakistan is misusing courts to silence activists, citing delays in bail hearings and harsh sentences against prominent campaigners.

QUETTA

A leading rights organisation has accused Pakistani authorities of using the judiciary to silence activists, pointing to the continued detention of Mahrang Baloch and human rights lawyer Imaan Mazari-Hazir.

The Baloch Voice for Justice said the prolonged imprisonment of the two women reflects a wider effort to suppress marginalised communities. It noted that nearly a year has passed since Mahrang Baloch and other leaders of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee were arrested.

According to the group, the Balochistan High Court heard bail pleas on December 17, 2025. While the defence completed its arguments, prosecutors allegedly failed to present strong evidence. The court reserved its decision, but no verdict has been issued after almost three months.

The rights body said such delays violate Article 10-A of Pakistan's Constitution, which promises a fair and timely trial. It warned that justice delayed weakens trust in the legal system and harms personal liberty.

The organisation also raised concern that the Islamabad High Court has not scheduled hearings for cases involving Mazari-Hazir and her husband, Hadi Ali Chatta. It alleged interference by intelligence agencies in judicial matters, calling it a threat to judicial independence.

Last month, a court reportedly sentenced Mazari-Hazir and her husband to a total of 17 years in prison and fined them heavily in a case linked to social media posts.

The arrests and convictions have drawn international criticism, with activists saying the situation tests Pakistan's commitment to rule of law and civil liberties.

Officials warn Jamaat-e-Islami may pressure the government despite Bangladesh Nationalist Party majority, while Tarique Rahman prioritizes stability and balanced foreign relations

B'desh PM-in-waiting Rahman faces Jamaat challenges

DHAKA

Tarique Rahman prepares to lead Bangladesh amid concerns over Jamaat influence and internal instability.

Tarique Rahman will take charge as Prime Minister following a massive election win by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Many citizens see his victory as a fresh start after a turbulent period under Muhammad Yunus.

However, concerns remain over the strong rise of Jamaat-e-Islami, which secured 77 seats, its best result ever. Analysts say Rahman's biggest challenge will be restoring order at home rather than managing foreign relations.

Security officials warn that Jamaat could try to pressure the new government if it is denied a major role. Though the BNP holds a clear majority, Jamaat's expanded reach gives it influence, especially in border areas near West Bengal.

Intelligence sources allege that during Yunus's tenure, relaxed visa rules and open sea routes benefited Inter-Services Intelligence operations. They claim these routes were misused for smuggling arms, drugs and militants.

Critics also accuse Jamaat supporters of encouraging mob violence, targeting media, minorities and political opponents. Police were often slow to act, further weakening law and order. Despite its gains, experts say Jamaat is disappointed it did not win power outright. The party has long faced criticism for opposing Bangladesh's independence in 1971. Observers believe voters rejected its ideology in favor of stability.

Rahman has promised balanced foreign ties while putting Bangladesh first. Officials say he is unlikely to allow Jamaat unchecked freedom, as his priority will be restoring peace and strengthening institutions in a divided nation.

Bondi beach shooter appears in Sydney court

SYDNEY

Naveed Akram, accused of the deadly Bondi Beach terror attack, appeared in a Sydney court for the first time on Monday. The 24-year-old faces 59 charges, including 15 counts of murder and one count of committing a terrorist act.

Akram appeared via video-link from a supermax prison, where he has been held since being discharged from hospital after the December 14, 2025 attack. Authorities allege that Akram, along with his father Sajid—who was shot dead by police at the scene—opened fire on a Jewish Hanukkah celebration using rifles and shotguns. The attack killed 15 people and injured dozens, marking Australia's deadliest mass shooting since 1996.

Court documents revealed that the father and son had practiced firearms training at a rural property before the attack. During Monday's administrative hearing, Akram remained mostly silent, speaking only when addressed by the presiding Magistrate. His lawyer, Ben Archbold, said it is too early to indicate what plea his client will enter. The case is set to return to court in April.

Earlier this month, Mike Burgess, Director-General of Security of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, told a Senate hearing that the attackers had successfully avoided detection before the attack. Burgess said the alleged terrorists "demonstrated a high level of security awareness to hide their plot" and effectively stayed off intelligence and law enforcement radar.

Authorities continue to investigate the circumstances of the attack, the motives behind it, and the security lapses that allowed it to occur. The trial of Naveed Akram is expected to draw significant attention due to the scale of the tragedy and its impact on the Australian community.

Indian Navy ship 'Surat' made a port call in Bahrain

MANAMA

The Indian Navy said the visit of INS Surat to Bahrain has reinforced India's commitment to regional maritime security. The Navy stated that the ship's engagements improved coordination and information-sharing with multinational partners.

During its stay, INS Surat interacted with the Combined Maritime Forces, which is based in Bahrain. The group works to promote security and stability in international waters. The Navy said the meetings boosted operational cooperation and strengthened efforts to keep global sea lanes safe.The visit highlighted India's focus on working closely with friendly navies in important maritime regions. Officials said such exchanges improve interoperability and build trust among partner nations.

In other developments, Dimitrios-Eleftherios Kataras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy, received a ceremonial Guard of Honour at South Block in New Delhi. He was welcomed by Indian Navy Chief Dinesh K Tripathi. Meanwhile, India is preparing to host the International Fleet Review and Exercise MILAN in Visakhapatnam. Naval ships from several countries have started arriving. These include HTMS Krabi from Thailand, HMAS Warramunga from Australia, and SLNS Nandi Mitra and SLNS Sagara from Sri Lanka.The Eastern Naval Command said the participation of these ships reflects strong maritime ties and shared commitment to safe seas. The Indian Navy added that such events promote cooperation, friendship and collective security among nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

BAPS Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi completes 2 years

ABU DHABI

The BAPS Hindu Mandir Abu Dhabi celebrated its second anniversary, marking two years of spiritual service and cultural harmony in the United Arab Emirates.

Since its inauguration on February 14, 2024, by Mahant Swami Maharaj, the temple has welcomed over four million visitors from more than 100 countries. It has emerged as a global symbol of peaceful coexistence and shared human values.

More than 8,000 devotees, diplomats and community members attended the anniversary event themed "Mandir: Our Family, Our Future." Speakers said the temple has grown beyond a place of worship into a center that connects families and communities.

Swami Brahmviharidas delivered the keynote address, saying the Mandir has begun to "speak to the world" with a message of harmony. He noted that ambassadors, faith leaders and tourists have praised its efforts to promote unity.

The event also honoured Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan for supporting cultural coexistence. He described the temple as a symbol of friendship between India and the United Arab Emirates.

Special sessions titled "Mandir Talks" highlighted its global and social impact. Diplomats called it a bridge between heritage and modern ties. Families shared how it strengthened traditions and service. Community leaders praised its role in inclusion and volunteer work.

Children ended the event with pledges on positivity, family values, national harmony and care for the environment, reflecting hopes for a peaceful future.

Israeli forces kill Hezbollah member

TEL AVIV

The Israel Defense Forces said it killed a Hezbollah member early Monday in southern Lebanon. The military said the man was trying to rebuild Hezbollah's military sites in the Hanin area. Israel said his actions broke agreements between the two countries. Last week, troops from the 91st Division also killed three Hezbollah members and destroyed buildings and equipment used for attacks. The army said it will continue acting against threats in Lebanon.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	3		8				6	7
7		6		2	3	9		
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6	8	9	7	2	5	4	3	1
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3	7	6	5	9	2	1	8	4
9	4	1	8	6	3	5	2	7
7	1	3	2	5	8	9	4	6
5	9	2	6	4	7	3	1	8
8	6	4	3	1	9	7	5	2

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

CHILDHOOD CANCER

Less than 30% of kids with cancer survive in Pak

ISLAMABAD

Health experts say fewer than 30 percent of children diagnosed with cancer in Pakistan survive, mainly due to late diagnosis and limited treatment facilities.

Around 10,000 children are diagnosed with cancer in Pakistan every year. Experts shared these figures at an awareness session organised by the Indus Hospital and Health Network. They said nearly 400,000 children and teenagers worldwide develop cancer each year, with about 80 percent of cases reported in low and middle-income countries.

In developed nations, survival rates range between 80 and 85 percent. However, in countries like Pakistan, survival is much lower because of delayed detection and lack of specialised care.

Dr Naeem Jabbar, a consultant in pediatric haematology-oncology, said most childhood cancers can be cured if treated on time. He explained that unlike adult cancers, childhood cancers usually have no clear link to lifestyle. With proper treatment, cure rates can reach up to 85 percent.

He added that survival in Pakistan remains low due to poor awareness of early symptoms, shortage of trained specialists, limited treatment centres and families stopping treatment because of high costs. Common cancers among children include leukaemia, lymphoma, brain and bone tumours, and other rare types.

Doctors said treatments such as chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy are available if started early. Dr Shumail Ashraf said the department in Karachi handles about 1,000 new cases yearly and has treated over 16,000 children since 2014.

Experts urged parents and teachers to recognise warning signs early and seek timely medical help.

Omarzai All-Round Heroics Seal Afghanistan Victory

Afghanistan secured their first 2026 T20 WC win, defeating UAE by five wickets

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan registered a crucial five-wicket victory over the UAE in the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Monday, keeping their slim Super Eights hopes alive. The win was powered by a brilliant all-round performance from Azmatullah Omarzai, whose incisive spell of 4-15 dismantled the UAE's lower order before his unbeaten 40 off just 21 balls guided Afghanistan home with four deliveries to spare.

On a surface with noticeable moisture, Omarzai adjusted his line and length cleverly, exploiting the conditions to trouble the batters. His disciplined approach ensured that the UAE, despite a promising start, could only post 160/9. Mujeeb Ur Rahman provided solid support with two wickets, while Rashid Khan delivered a tidy spell that restricted scoring in the middle overs.

The UAE innings was initially rocked by early setbacks, but a fluent 84-run third-wicket partnership between Alishan Sharafu and Sohaib Khan revived their fortunes. Sharafu struck a composed 40, while Sohaib continued his fine form at the venue with a well-crafted 68 off 47 balls, including five boundaries and two sixes. His second consecutive fifty at the ground helped the UAE recover momentum and push towards a competitive total, even as four wickets fell in the final five overs.

Chasing 161, Afghanistan faced early pressure but opener Ibrahim Zadran anchored the innings with a steady 53 off 41 deliveries, laced with five fours and a six. His composed knock stabilized the chase before his dismissal reopened the contest. The UAE bowlers, led by Muhammad Arfan's disciplined two-wicket spell, kept things tight and raised hopes of an upset.

However, Omarzai returned to the spotlight in the closing stages. Displaying composure and power, he struck two fours and three sixes in his match-winning cameo, ensuring Afghanistan clinched their first points of the tournament. Afghanistan's batting depth ultimately proved decisive against a UAE side whose middle-order collapse left them with a total that was competitive but not commanding. The result also confirmed South Africa's qualification for the Super Eights, joining India and the West Indies, who had already secured their spots.

Jaipur Clinch Raffles Sirmour Cup Title

JAIPUR

Jaipur Polo Team dominated Carysil Suhana to secure their eighth season title

Jaipur Polo Team produced a commanding performance to defeat Carysil Suhana 14–10 and lift the prestigious Raffles Sirmour Cup, marking their eighth title of an exceptional season. The victory was built on attacking precision, tactical discipline, and sustained control across six competitive chukkers.

Carysil Suhana made a confident start, applying early pressure and capitalising on quick transitions to establish a 3–1 lead at the end of the opening chukker. Their sharp movement and proactive play unsettled Jaipur in the early exchanges. However, Jaipur regrouped effectively in the second chukker, improving their possession game and tightening their defensive structure. Despite their resurgence, Carysil narrowly held onto a 4–3 advantage at halftime.

The contest turned decisively in the third chukker. Jaipur shifted gears with authority, unleashing a flurry of goals through swift ball movement and incisive forward play. Lance Watson spearheaded the charge with clinical finishing in front of goal, while Manuel Fernandez Llorente provided strong support in attack. Their combined efforts overturned the deficit as Jaipur surged ahead 8–6 by the end of the period, seizing full control of the momentum.

The fourth chukker evolved into a tactical battle, with both teams displaying defensive discipline. The score remained unchanged at 8–6, but Jaipur's composure and structured approach ensured they maintained control of proceedings. Gradually, they tightened their grip, dictating the tempo and limiting Carysil's attacking opportunities.

Jaipur extended their dominance in the fifth chukker, applying sustained pressure that translated into sharp finishing. Their relentless attacking display stretched the lead to 11–6, placing them firmly within sight of the trophy. Carysil Suhana mounted a spirited comeback attempt in the final period, with Matias Vial and Manuel Prado leading the charge and narrowing the margin.

However, Jaipur's attacking depth and game management proved decisive. Lance Watson delivered a standout performance with an impressive nine goals, anchoring the team's offensive superiority. Manuel Fernandez Llorente added four crucial strikes, while HH Maharaja Sawai Padmanabh Singh of Jaipur contributed one goal to seal the triumph.

Steve Smith Added To Australia Squad

Veteran batter strengthens Aus ahead of crucial T20 WC clash

DUBAI

Veteran batter Steve Smith has been officially added to Australia's squad for the ongoing T20 World Cup, providing a timely boost ahead of their must-win encounter against Sri Lanka at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Pallekele on Monday evening.

Smith's inclusion comes at a critical juncture in the tournament, with Australia needing a victory to keep their campaign on track. Known for his composure and vast experience in high-pressure situations, Smith's presence is expected to add stability to the batting order. His ability to anchor innings while accelerating when required makes him a valuable asset, particularly in crunch games.

Australia's campaign has faced stiff competition in the group stages, and team management appears keen to reinforce the squad with proven performers. Smith, who has featured prominently across formats for Australia over the years, brings tactical awareness and adaptability to different match scenarios. His experience in subcontinental conditions could prove crucial on the Pallekele surface, which often offers assistance to both spinners and stroke-makers.

The clash against Sri Lanka is seen as pivotal for Australia's progression in the tournament. With net run rate and points table dynamics playing a significant role at this stage, every aspect of team balance becomes vital. Smith's addition may allow Australia to restructure their batting combination, potentially offering greater flexibility in the middle order.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are expected to pose a strong challenge on home-like conditions. The evening fixture under lights at Pallekele could also bring dew into play, influencing bowling strategies and field placements.

Australia's team management has expressed confidence that Smith's inclusion will provide the necessary depth and experience for the high-stakes contest.

As the five-time world champions prepare for the decisive encounter, all eyes will be on how the reshaped lineup performs in what promises to be a fiercely contested battle.

Jack Jarvis approved as replacement for injured Safyaan Shari

DUBAI

Jack Jarvis has been approved as a replacement for injured seamer Safyaan Sharif in the Scotland squad for the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup, the ICC said on Monday. Sharif injured his right groin during a team training session on February 12 and will be replaced by Jarvis, who has eight T20I caps for Scotland and was already with the squad as a travelling reserve.

The Event Technical Committee (ETC) of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 has approved Jack Jarvis as a replacement for Safyaan Sharif in the Scotland squad, the ICC said in a statement.

The ETC consists of Wasim Khan ICC General Manager Cricket (ICC Representative), Gaurav Saxena (IBC Representative), Hemang Amin (Host Representative), Shaun Pollock (Independent Representative). Having been handed a late invite into the tournament less than three weeks ago, Scotland coaching staff and players had to swiftly pivot from pre-season training to tournament mode, whilst behind the scenes operational planning went into overdrive to ensure the squad reached India with enough preparation time.

Three matches in Kolkata saw a comprehensive victory over Italy countered by defeats to the West Indies and to England, the latter in front of 50,000 spectators at Eden Gardens. Scotland, sitting third in Group C, now head to Mumbai to face Nepal on Tuesday evening but require other results in Group to fall in their favour if they are to progress to the Super Eights.

Scotland's 11th hour entry, replacing Bangladesh, marked a fifth consecutive appearance at Men's T20 World Cups. Scotland: Richie Berrington (c), Tom Bruce, Matthew Cross, Bradley Currie, Oliver Davidson, Chris Greaves, Zainullah Ihsan, Michael Jones, Michael Leask, Finlay McCreath, Brandon McMullen, George Munsey, Jack Jarvis, Mark Watt, Bradley Wheal.

Ganguly on India's dominance over Pak in T20 WC

NEW DELHI

After India recorded a 61-run triumph over arch-rivals Pakistan in the Group A clash of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, former India skipper Sourav Ganguly believes the idea of an automatic big match between India and Pakistan is outdated, as the intensity and competitiveness that once defined the rivalry no longer feel the same. Defending champions India's win over Pakistan also confirmed their place in the Super Eights. Ishan Kishan's blistering 77 had set the tone earlier in the evening, and India's bowlers ensured the target of 176 was always out of reach to dismiss Pakistan for 114 in 18 overs.

Cerundolo wins Argentina Open title, his first ATP Tour crown since 2024

BUENOS AIRES

Top seed and local favorite Francisco Cerundolo secured his fourth ATP title with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Italy's Luciano Darderi in the Argentina Open final. A defeated finalist in 2021 and 2025, hometown favourite Cerundolo held his nerve in a see-saw final set, in which all but two games featured at least one break point, to lift his fourth ATP Tour trophy and his first on Argentine soil.

Cerundolo struggled at times on serve but dominated at the baseline to take the match in one hour and 37 minutes on the outdoor clay of the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club.

The 27-year-old broke Darderi early in both sets and sealed victory with a trademark inside-out forehand. This is the best moment of my career so far, said Cerundolo, who had lost two previous finals at the ATP 250 event.

I wanted to win in my hometown and country, in front of my family and friends. I thought this day might never come but today I played one of the best matches of my career. I played aggressively and didn't let him take the initiative at any stage. It's a final so you have to go for it, and I played for every point here.

Second seed Darderi won 73 percent of points on his first serve but just 24 percent on his second, while committing 29 unforced errors. The No. 19 player in the ATP Rankings, Cerundolo is the seventh home champion in the history of the Argentina Open, which was first held in 2001.

Carlsen Crowned First Freestyle Chess Champion

NORWAY

Norway's Magnus Carlsen added yet another accolade to his illustrious career, becoming the first official FIDE Freestyle Chess world champion with a comeback victory over American grandmaster Fabiano Caruana in Germany. The 35-year-old sealed the title in Weissenhaus with a composed draw in the fourth and final game of the match, completing a 2.5–1.5 triumph against his 33-year-old opponent. The result marked a historic milestone in the newly formalised freestyle format under the International Chess Federation (FIDE), further reinforcing Carlsen's status as one of the game's greatest competitors. Carlsen's path to the crown, however, was far from straightforward. The defining moment of the contest came in Sunday's dramatic third game.

Rashid Khan Claims Historic 700th T20 Wicket

NEW DELHI

Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan etched his name deeper into cricketing history by becoming the first player to claim 700 wickets in T20 cricket. The landmark moment came during Afghanistan's Men's T20 World Cup Group D encounter against the United Arab Emirates at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi on Monday.

Rashid entered the contest on 699 wickets and reached the milestone in the 16th over of the UAE innings. Muhammad Arfan attempted a reverse sweep but missed the delivery and disturbed his stumps, resulting in a hit-wicket dismissal. The wicket handed Rashid his historic 700th scalp in the shortest format of the game. Notably, the leg-spinner refrained from an animated celebration, choosing instead to stay focused as Afghanistan sought a crucial win to keep their slim Super Eights hopes alive.

The achievement followed a brief wait. Rashid had moved to 698 and 699 wickets during Afghanistan's previous match against South Africa at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad last week. In New Delhi, he bowled 3.2 overs without success before finally striking. Prior to dismissing Arfan, he had conceded 17 runs in 20 deliveries, underlining the patience required before reaching the milestone.

Rashid has long dominated the T20 wicket charts. Retired West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo sits second with 631 wickets, while fellow West Indian off-spinner Sunil Narine is the closest active cricketer with 613 scalps.

In the international arena, Rashid also leads the list of T20I wicket-takers with 191 wickets for Afghanistan. New Zealand's retired pacer Tim Southee, with 164 wickets, and leg-spinner Ish Sodhi, with 162, follow him on that list.

Speaking last week about the impending milestone, Rashid had maintained a grounded perspective. 700 wickets, whatever the achievement is, it will continue. I have not kept any target in my mind that I will take 700 wickets and stop. When I play for the national team at the World Cup, I make 100% effort. And when the team requires it, I take the wicket, he said. With this historic feat, Rashid Khan further cemented his legacy as one of the finest T20 bowlers the game has witnessed.

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